

Just an angry, rambling man  
Suspect in Roanoke shooting says all  
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Mardi Gras in Sydney!  
Gays and lesbians party down  
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Fellini follies  
'Satyricon' an orgy of lust  
at the Castro Theatre.  
see Arts section



# BAY AREA REPORTER

Vol. 31 • No. 10 • 8 March 2001

Serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender communities since 1971

## Proposed ordinance protects renters and owners alike

by Katie Szymanski

The fact that a good percentage of people with AIDS are homeless, and that close to 200 homeless people died on the streets of San Francisco last year did not ignite a peep from so-called queer advocates. Yet when tenancies-in-common and other profit-making housing schemes face a little regulation, the old "bad for gays" rhetoric flows untempered, with a handful of poster queers claiming that their homes — like the street encampments that multiply with each eviction — will soon be deemed "illegal."

But queer housing activists are gradually educating the public about a pending piece of legislation introduced by Supervisor Chris Daly that would bring TICs under the same regulation as condominiums, much like the attempts of Proposition N, which failed to pass citywide in November.

The gay community was heavily manipulated during the Proposition N campaign; advertisements claimed that they would have no way to buy a house if Proposition N passed, and no way to pass their property on to their lovers. Ironically, however, what most people may not realize is that Daly's legislation — a compromise if ever there was one — will make it much easier for many LGBT people to own their own homes, whether they hold property already or are simply trying to stay afloat as renters.

"There are many people who call me up very upset by what they've been told about the compromise legislation," Daly told the *Bay Area Reporter*. "By the end of the conversation they are very happy."

Daly's legislation was actually originally proposed by former Supervisor Sue Bierman as a compromise worked out between tenant advocates and real estate representatives. But because the last Board of Supervisors had heavy ties to developers, the legislation went nowhere, and tenant advocates instead opted for the more radical Proposition N.

"Proposition N proponents did not put this compromise legislation on the ballot, they put everything they wanted on the ballot," said Daly. "It was a very strong tenant measure."

"To be honest I don't think most



Chris Daly

## Hundreds join Berkeley demo over drug company profiteering

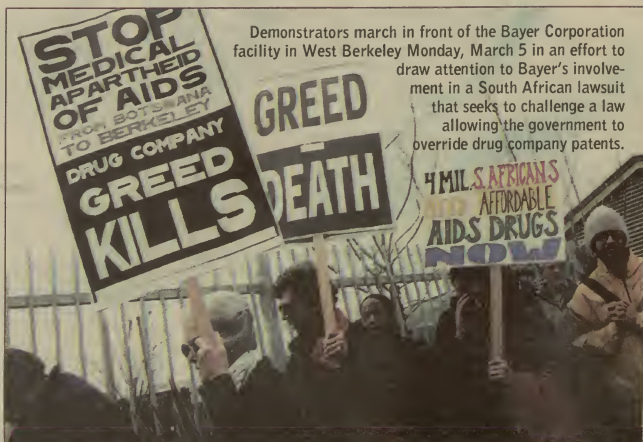
by Liz Highleyman

On Monday, March 5, nearly 200 demonstrators gathered at the Bayer Corporation's West Berkeley research facility to protest the company's participation in a lawsuit to block access to affordable HIV drugs in South Africa.

Protesters picketed outside the company's offices for nearly an hour. Following the picket, some 39 protesters sat down in front of the compound gates and were arrested by Berkeley Police, including the vice mayor of Berkeley and several Berkeley City Council members.

The demonstration, organized by ACT UP/East Bay and endorsed by over 50 organizations and individuals, was one of dozens held across the U.S. and world as part of a "Global Action to Stop Medical Apartheid" called by South Africa's Treatment Action Campaign. Activists demanded that Bayer withdraw from a lawsuit by the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Association of South Africa against a South African law that allows the manufacture or import of generic drugs; hearings on the suit began Monday but were delayed. Bayer, the only Bay Area participant in the lawsuit, does not sell anti-HIV medications.

AIDS treatment advocates claim that only about 0.2 percent of the estimated 4.5 million



Jane Philomen, Ireland

HIV-infected people in South Africa can afford patented medications, and that the availability of generic equivalents could bring the price of treatment down from about \$15,000 annually to less than \$500 per year.

Most activists were not demanding an

overhaul of the patent system, but rather that drug companies allow access to medications in cases of national emergency. Said Berkeley Vice Mayor Maudelle Shirek, a veteran of the South African anti-apartheid struggle, "We

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## 'Queer' banner at LGBT Center drawing plenty of response

by David Fraser

The "Queerest Place in America" doesn't look it.

In fact, the only way you'd know that the building under construction beside the dowager Victorian at 1800 Market Street is being built as a comprehensive center for the LGBT communities is from the huge banner that proclaims "The Center: The Queerest Place in America."

Since the site just down Market Street from the Castro is "not on a lot of radar screens" in San Francisco, the banner was designed as a promotional tool, a "means of branding and provoking thought," according

to Mike Marshall.

Marshall is the interim executive director of the San Francisco Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Community Center Project. By its wording, the banner, stretched across the open building's steel skeleton, seems to be doing what it is supposed to: draw attention and provoke discussion.

The word "queer" is loaded with overlaid meanings for different people and groups, and the banner has drawn a range of responses from pleased or offended persons.

The center plans to hang new banners with different messages every two to three weeks.

Marshall says most responses (to be posted on the center Web site, [www.sfcenter.org](http://www.sfcenter.org))

have been positive, but he shares a sheaf of e-mails which cover a lot of emotional ground:

• "What's the next banner going to say? 'More Faggots/Dykes per square mile than anyplace in America?' I think this project is misguided."

• "I found it ironic that the very reason I object to it would be a means to promote it. I am a bit younger than the Stonewall generation, but I do have vivid, and rather horrifying memories of being called 'queer' as a kid in

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Rick Gerhart

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For more info: Call 415-252-9266

## SF's crowning affair



**H**.M.I.M. Empress XXXVI Chablis, left, and H.M.I.M. Emperor XXIX A.N. Tom Basch pose for their subjects following their coronation Saturday, March 3 at the Imperial Millennium Ball in San Francisco. The coronation was the culmination of over six hours of song, glamour, farewells, and welcomes as out-of-town royalty were presented to the outgoing reigning monarchs, Empress Suzie Wong and Emperor John Carrillo, along with spectacular musical numbers by the candidates and others.

## Pet architecture on display tomorrow

by Katie Szymanski

**T**he days of deciding between a two-story duplex and a spacious dome may be over for San Francisco's humans, but the word "crisis" is nowhere to be found when it comes to animal housing at Petchitecture 2001: Building a Better City.

A benefit for Pets Are Wonderful Support—the organization that provides services to people with AIDS so that they can keep their furry companions—Petchitecture showcases the custom pet dwellings

of the stars and auctions off some hip digs to the guardians of deserving four-legged denizens. Created by leading architects and designers, featured pet homes include a "Doggy Space" that could pass for a studio apartment, a "Tower of Cattitude" for the sassy feline, and the "Pavilion Empress" suitable for any room with Asian decor.

Petchitecture 2001 will be held Friday, March 9, from 7 to 9:30 p.m. at One Market Plaza. The event costs \$45 for people; dogs get in for free. Tickets can be purchased through the Community Box Office located at 400 Castro

Street in San Francisco.

Proceeds from Petchitecture will help PAWS to increase outreach and education to medical, veterinary, and social service providers regarding the special circumstances and needs for persons with AIDS who have companion animals; expand services to more people this year; and expand services to people living with terminal illnesses other than AIDS by 2002.

For more information, and for a sneak peak at some of the outrageous homes only a pet could afford, visit [www.pawssf.org](http://www.pawssf.org). ▼

## Queer men's health proposals sought

by Liz Highleyman

**T**he Bay Area Gay and Queer Men's Health Collective, a group dedicated to encouraging community health and wellness initiatives for gay and queer men, is seeking workshop proposals for its upcoming summit.

After two national gay men's health summits in 1999 and 2000, organizers and participants decided to shift their focus to local gay health activism, projects, and meetings. The daylong Bay Area

summit, entitled "A Healthy Future for Gay and Queer Men," will take place on Saturday, April 21 at the Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy in the Castro.

The collective is now seeking proposals from those who would like to present workshops at the summit, which will cover all aspects of queer men's health. In addition to traditional workshop presentations, the organizers also welcome creative ideas involving movement, art, and other means of communication and education.

Proposals should include a title and a 150-200 word abstract describing the presentation's objectives, issues to be covered, intended audience, and format. The deadline for proposals is this Monday, March 12. ▼

For complete proposal guidelines, call (415) 820-3200, ext. 4666 or send e-mail to [healthyhomos@yahoo.com](mailto:healthyhomos@yahoo.com). Send proposals to S. Tierney, 584 Castro Street #721, San Francisco, CA 94114.

## Easter grants are nun too shabby

by Katie Szymanski

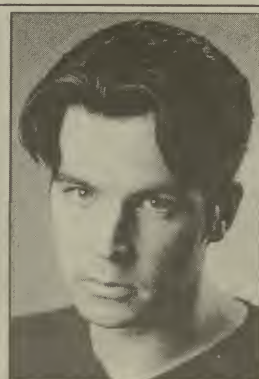
**E**aster is approaching and it's time to honor the sacred. The community's most holy

redeemers, the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, would like to remind people that the holiday brings more than festive street parties and screaming bigots; it also ushers in the Sisters' Easter

2001 grants, to be awarded to deserving nonprofits.

The application deadline is Monday, March 26.

The Sisters currently are accepting applications. **page 11 ►**



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# Dog owner supports change in law for DPs

by Ed Walsh

**S**haron Smith, the partner of dog mauling victim Diane Whipple, will have an unlikely ally in her efforts to lobby for a change in state law to give comparable rights to domestic partners in civil lawsuits: dog owner Robert Noel.

In an interview with the *Bay Area Reporter* on Tuesday, March 6, Noel said he and his wife Marjorie Knoller strongly support a change in the law.

"There should be another alternative to full-blown marriage," he said.

Noel said he was well aware of the legal challenges faced by gay couples through the work he and Knoller have done on behalf of a volunteer AIDS legal referral service. Noel and Knoller are attorneys.

But Noel questioned Smith's motivation for filing a wrongful death suit.

"Ms. Smith has her own agenda," said Noel. "If she was so committed to Ms. Whipple, then why didn't she register as a domestic partner? She could have also filed for a legal adoption as Ms. Knoller and I did with [Pelican Bay inmate] Paul [Schneider.] You can get an adult adoption for less than it costs to get a marriage license."

Noel categorized Smith's planned wrongful death suit as "malicious prosecution."

"There's no legal basis for it, I don't know what else you could call it."

Noel said he expects the suit will be thrown out of court.

Meanwhile, Smith's attorneys say they are on track to go ahead with the suit. Kate Kendell, the executive director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, told the *B.A.R.* that Whipple's recently found will, though informal and not drawn up by an attorney, could be very beneficial in establishing their case.

If Smith wins her wrongful death suit, it would be a first because state law currently only allows married couples the right to collect in wrongful death. Kendell will be co-counsel on the wrongful death suit with Smith's lead attorney, Michael Cardoza.

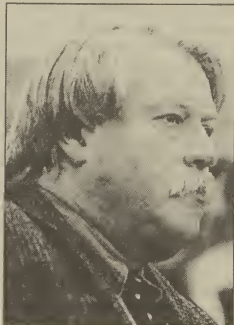
"The important lesson here is that gay and lesbian couples protect themselves and often that means getting the help of a lawyer," said Kendell.

Kendell and other activists hope that the Whipple case will fuel support for AB25 that would give domestic partners comparable rights in civil lawsuits.

Meanwhile, San Francisco District Attorney Terence Hallinan said he hopes to make a decision over criminal charges by late this week or early next week.

This past week, the criminal investigation took a number of new twists ranging from renewed political bad blood between Hallinan and Mayor Willie Brown to hints of bestiality.

Late last week, a warrant granting authorities the right to search the apartment of dog owners Knoller and Noel was made public. The document gave police direction on the search they conducted last month. It reveals for the first time that police were told to look for "any photos, drawings, or materials depicting cruelty to



Robert Noel

animals, including sexual acts with dogs; any material or correspondence describing sexual acts by Noel or Knoller that involve dogs."

Prosecutors say they can't reveal any information about the evidence seized in the home or whether they suspect the couple had been engaged in bestiality.

Noel vigorously denied any involvement with bestiality in his interview with the *B.A.R.*

"That's the Department of Corrections typical bullshit," he said.

In an interview published in the *San Jose Mercury News* on Monday, March 5, Noel and Knoller's newly adopted inmate son, Paul Schneider, also angrily denied it.

"Hell, no," he said when asked if he had ever seen pictures depicting bestiality between the dogs and the couple. "I don't even want to justify that by talking about it."

Noel said that another erroneous report had suggested that he videotaped Knoller and Schneider having sexual intercourse in prison. Noel said that he wasn't even allowed to enter the prison with a digital wristwatch camera.

"How am I going to get a video camera in, past the metal detector, and the eight guards? And how is Marjorie going to get past the concrete and glass to have sex with Paul? That doggie sex thing has the same ring to it as that. There's absolutely no truth to it."

Noel told the *B.A.R.* that he will request a change of venue if criminal charges are filed because of the saturation of negative and false reports in the media.

Schneider planned to represent himself on Wednesday, March 7 in a hearing held at the Pelican Bay prison that will decide how much of the evidence seized from the cell he shared with prisoner Dale Bretches should be turned over to prosecutors. Authorities have alleged that Schneider and Bretches ran an attack dog breeding business from prison, allegations strongly denied by Noel and Schneider. At Wednesday's hearing, Knoller was appointed as Schneider's attorney at his request.

The Pelican Bay hearing sparked a new round of sniping between Brown and Hallinan. Before it was decided that the proceeding would be held in Pelican Bay, Brown said it should not be held in San Francisco. The mayor cited security concerns. Hallinan countered that he was concerned Brown's involvement could further delay charges being filed and said that the mayor should stay out of it.

"He didn't have a proper place getting involved, trying to have an

impact on the criminal justice system," Hallinan told reporters outside a scheduling hearing at the Hall of Justice on Monday, March 5. That hearing concluded with Superior Court Judge Lenard Louie deciding it made the most sense for the hearing to be held at Pelican Bay Prison in Crescent City, more than 350 miles north of San Francisco.

Police have said that one of the strongest pieces of evidence against Noel and Knoller is the *Manstopper* attack dog training book that was discovered by a television reporter in the course of an interview with Noel. Police insist the book wasn't there when they searched his apartment and have accused him of hiding it. Noel said that's not true.

"It was right there all the time. They just left it. Why, I don't know," he said.

Noel said that because the book was part of a protected legal packet sent to him by Bretches, it is protected by attorney-client privilege. Noel said he will turn the book over to the special master, the legal term for the court-appointed intermediary, but he expects the special master won't turn it over to police or prosecutors.

Noel said he also will fight the effort to put his female dog, Hera, to death unless it can be proven that Hera joined the male dog, Bane, in the January 26 attack on Whipple. ▼

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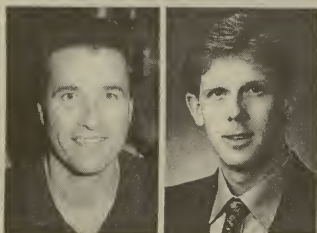
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# CAPS to present HIV prevention confab in SF

by David Fraser

A conference titled "Renewing HIV Prevention" will be held Friday, April 20 in San Francisco. The daylong meeting is designed to boost the use of research in HIV prevention by bringing scientists face to face with people who might benefit from their findings.

The agenda includes poster sessions, workshops, and formal presentations by HIV experts.

Sponsored by the Center for AIDS Prevention Studies of the AIDS Research Institute at the University of California, San Francisco, the event is aimed at sharing CAPS research findings with a range of people from health service providers to policy makers to members of the community at large.

Registration deadline for the conference is next Thursday, March 15. Since there will be no on-site registration, pre-registration is required.

Organizers said that some need-based scholarships were available for registration, travel, and/or hotel costs. The scholarships are intended to broaden and diversify the attendance pool. Applicants will receive a response by March 21.

Registration is \$50, which covers conference materials, food, and drink. Registration begins the previous afternoon, from 4 to 7:30 p.m., with a reception running from 6 to 7:30. Registration can be done online at [www.rdlent.com](http://www.rdlent.com) or via fax or mail. The contact for information is (916) 443-0218 or [Adrienne@RDLent.com](mailto:Adrienne@RDLent.com).

Conference organizer Ellen

Goldstein told the *Bay Area Reporter* that one goal of the conference was to present some CAPS research in a way that is "more interactive" between specialists and the community.

Goldstein, co-director of the Technology and Information Exchange at CAPS, said the conference came in response to community members' requests for more information on CAPS findings: "They asked us to share what we were learning."

A preliminary list of workshops ranges from model prevention programs to new directions in HIV prevention to current research findings, research methodologies and program design, to dissemination strategies.

The tentative agenda is as follows:

Model prevention programs, targeting:

- young gay men (MPowerment)
- Latino gay men (Hermanos de Luna y Sol)
- prison populations (Centerforce)

New directions in HIV prevention:

- for HIV-positive persons
- sexual abuse and HIV risk
- prevention needs for transgendered persons

Current research findings:

- from CAPS traineeships in AIDS prevention studies
- international prevention
- HIV prevention by and for gay men

Methods: the nuts and bolts of research, evaluation, and program design:

- understanding and use of epidemiology statistics and research

assessing HIV prevention programs

• program evaluation  
Dissemination strategies:

• using the Internet to reach clients, research participants, and providers

• creative use of institutions to share findings

• effective print media including fact sheets, zines, and newsletters

Keynote presentations will be made by Cynthia Gomez, of UCSF's CAPS and AIDS Research Institute, whose work has focused on diverse populations; Ron Stall of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, who has focused on finding ways to halt the spread of HIV in the U.S. and abroad; and Barry Zack of Centerforce, who has developed health education and intervention programs for prisoners.

Among the presenters will be Tooru Nemoto, a UCSF/CAPS expert on male-to-female transgender issues. His panel will include community collaborators.

Goldstein, the organizer, said the conference, planned as the first of an annual series, parallels CAPS outreach efforts via mailed fact sheets in English and Spanish; a Web site ([www.caps.ucsf.edu](http://www.caps.ucsf.edu)); and through academic journals.

She added that for the conference, "The key is providing information on science we are developing; there won't be a lot on how to talk to your doctor or specifically how to prevent" infection.

Goldstein said panelists hope to convey useful information to interested professionals and community members, and to discuss with them the implications of investigators' findings. ▼

## Lecture on organ transplant issues Wed.

by Cynthia Laird

The Bay Area HCV Consortium, a California nonprofit, community-based organization, will sponsor a forum on organ transplant and medical management issues for HIV-hepatitis C (HCV) co-infection people this Wednesday, March 14, in San Francisco.

The free program will feature speakers Dr. Michelle Roland, an adjunct professor of medicine with the University of California, San Francisco AIDS program; and Ed Wakil, associate medical director of the Liver Disease Management and Transplant program at California Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco.

Alan Franciscus, director of the Hepatitis C Support Project and chair of the Bay Area HCV Consortium, noted that protease in-

hibitor regimens (highly active antiretroviral therapy) can prolong the lives of those with HIV. High rates of HIV-HCV co-infection, however, can exacerbate management of HIV disease and HIV may accelerate liver damage brought on by HCV infection.

With longer life expectancy offered by widespread use of HAART and high rates of co-infection, more HIV-positive people are developing end-stage organ failure. Popular medical wisdom generally has excluded HIV-positive people from receiving organ transplants. However, a small case series from the large transplant center at the University of Pittsburgh offered liver transplants to five co-infected patients who absent HIV disease, met liver transplant criteria. The prognosis of this patient group was better than anticipated. HAART regimens were shown to control HIV progression at least in the

short term in spite of the immunosuppression brought on by the use of anti-rejection drugs post-transplant. The upcoming forum will showcase co-infection medical management issues and touch upon the ethical dilemma presented by organ transplantation of co-infected persons.

The forum is co-sponsored by Community Health Resource Center, the Hepatitis C Support Project, the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, and the San Francisco Department of Public Health. ▼

The forum takes place in the north tower auditorium at Davies Medical Center, at Castro and Duboce streets. Doors open at 6 p.m. for refreshments; the program starts at 6:30. For more information, call (415) 923-3155.

## Free energy fair Saturday at City Hall

by Cynthia Laird

By now people should be aware that California is in the midst of a serious energy crisis, and Mayor Willie Brown wants consumers to take advantage of a free energy fair the city is hosting this Saturday, March 10, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. in City Hall.

People can learn about conservation tips, look at energy-saving

appliances, and even exchange a standard incandescent bulb for a new, free minifluorescent bulb—a \$10 value. Additionally, three new energy-saving washers, dryers, and furnaces will be given away in raffles, along with solar-powered calculators and comforters.

"Using energy wisely is good for the environment, good for the community, and good for your pocketbook," said Francesca Vietor, director of the Department of the Envi-

ronment. "We need to do everything we can, as a city and as individuals, because energy efficiency will help us keep the lights on."

In addition to learning more about energy conservation, there will be door prizes, a youth poetry slam competition, children's games, an energy poster contest exhibition, and entertainment. For more information, call Kimberly Knox at the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, (415) 554-2425. ▼

# Design contest under way for Castro park

by David Fraser

**A** question: How to make meaning – even beauty – out of horror?

The answer, Gustavo Serina hopes, will be found in art.

Specifically, a sculpture memorial to gay victims of the Nazi Holocaust and its aftermath, to be integrated into the Pink Triangle Park and Memorial project under way in the Castro. The park is at the intersection of Castro, Market, and 17th streets.

Serina has been centrally involved in the project. A committee is now seeking design proposals from artists; the deadline for submissions is this Tuesday, March 13.

The call for designs asks for a "landscape-driven, sculptural memorial" to people who suffered due to their sexual orientation, during and after the Nazi Holocaust.

"We're encouraging artists to give their imagination full rein, and then after we make a decision, we'll go from there," said Serina, a longtime resident who calls himself simply a "neighborhood volunteer."

He hopes that through the memorial and park, "people will contemplate the horrors of the past and how they continue in the present, as with Matthew Shepard, and maybe they will think of a future where such horrors are a thing of the past."

Fellow organizer Joe Foster said the fact that gays were persecuted by the Nazi regime under Paragraph 175 of the German criminal code is well known. What is not as familiar is their continued persecution for sexual orientation during the subsequent Allied Occupation of Germany and then in the Federal Republic.

The Web site of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum ([www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org)) details Nazi persecution of gay men – lesbians and non-Germans were generally exempt – from 1933 onward.

"Between 1933 and 1945," according to the museum, "the police arrested an estimated 100,000 men as homosexuals. Most of the 50,000 men sentenced by the courts spent time in regular prisons, and between 5,000 and 15,000 were interned in concentration camps."

There is no reliable figure for the number of homosexuals who died in the camps.

During the Nuremberg trials, Allied judges were faced with claims from small numbers of gay men who survived the forced labor, abuse, and castration practices of concentration camps.

Foster said that the judges determined that original sentencing of gays under Paragraph 175 – basically an anti-sodomy law – was a "legitimate application" of German justice. The Allied judges sent many gay camp survivors back to prison on those grounds, although the concentration camps were closed.

The same rationale derailed gay claimants' hope of monetary reparations.

Moreover, Foster said, gay claims against people who worked in the camps often backfired. Camp personnel who brutalized gays forced to wear the pink triangle badge were judged later to have been enforcing legitimate German justice, were not charged

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Mitch-o takes a stroll through Pink Triangle Park.

## Civil unions bill introduced in state Legislature

by Katie Szymanski

**W**ell, who knew. It seems like just yesterday that LGBT Californians were holding their collective breath for legislation that would allow them to visit their lovers in the hospital.

Fast forward to March 2001 and suddenly we're looking at a full-fledged civil unions bill, in gay marriage Vermont-style.

AB1338, drafted by civil rights organizations like Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the National Center for Les-

bian Rights, was introduced last week by Assemblyman Paul Koretz, a Democrat from West Hollywood who otherwise leads a heterosexual life. Just like our liberal mountain state to the east, the legislation would allow LGBT couples to form a civil union and be entitled to all the benefits and re-

sponsibilities of marriage.

"We commend Assemblymember Koretz for introducing the bill," said Eric Astacaan, lobbyist for California Alliance for Pride and Equality.

Although Astacaan acknowledged that the current climate

page 23 ►



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## OPEN FORUM

## Toward civil unions

**R**ookie state Assemblyman Paul Koretz (D-West Hollywood) took a step toward equal rights last week when he introduced AB1338, a bill that would allow civil union licenses to be issued to gay and lesbian couples by county clerks. While the bill still has a long way to go before becoming law – and even that is in doubt – we appreciate Koretz's gutsy move to further the discussion among lawmakers about the inequities that exist for same-sex couples in the Golden State.

AB1338 would grant gay and lesbian couples living in the state the same rights and responsibilities as married couples. While some in the community aren't wild about gay marriage, many here and in other states view it as one of the most important issues facing us. To that end, civilized talk about Koretz's bill in the Legislature would likely bring up the many injustices that same-sex couples face and that married couples do not. California's four Democratic lesbian legislators – Assemblywomen Carole Migden (San Francisco), Jackie Goldberg (Los Angeles), and Christine Kehoe (San Diego), and state Senator Sheila Kuehl (Los Angeles) – have signed on as co-sponsors. In announcing the bill, Koretz said that some of the rights and responsibilities that would be covered under the proposal include access to health insurance, state taxes, community property, child custody, probation, and other areas.

After last year's disastrous Proposition 22 victory, the gay and lesbian community had to regroup. And, despite a Legislature dominated by Democrats, many were slow to oppose Proposition 22; and if they did, it wasn't something they publicized much. We would like to see more Democrats come out in support of Koretz's bill, which, even if it's not approved, would put some pressure on legislators to debate the merits of the bill and would certainly highlight the fact that right now same-sex couples are treated as second-class citizens in the state. Even Sharon Smith, the partner of dog-mauling victim Diane Whipple, will have a tough time in her effort to file a

wrongful death suit against the married couple who owned the dog. This horrific case points to the need for civil union legislation. Another pending bill, Migden's AB25, would allow domestic partners to sue in wrongful death cases; this too, deserves discussion and approval in the Legislature.

Interestingly, one of the major hurdles Koretz faces in getting movement on his bill isn't homophobia – it's the state's energy crisis. For months, lawmakers and Governor Gray Davis have been wrestling with power generators, an unsympathetic federal government, and public power advocates, trying to undo the failed electricity deregulation signed by former Governor Pete Wilson.



## Editorial

Already, groups that have little to do with the energy mess are finding that Davis and the lawmakers have given their issues (such as education reform) less attention. While it's natural that some legislation gets overshadowed during an emergency, we hope that legislators will soon get back to the business of holding hearings on other matters that also are important. Koretz's bill, in our opinion, falls into this category, along with Migden's AB25.

Last year Davis pledged to sign pro-gay legislation in 2001; we look to him to keep his word and not use the state's power emergency, as he likes to call it, to once again veto bills that would afford us more equality and lessen discrimination in our daily lives. ▼



## What he didn't say

by Elizabeth Toledo

**L**ast week I listened carefully as George W. Bush gave his first nationally televised address to a joint session of Congress. The absence of a civil rights agenda in his speech met my low expectations for this administration.

Bush focused on his tax cut plan – much of which would benefit the upper 1 percent of the nation's income bracket. And he discussed his plans to channel tax dollars to religious-based initiatives, ironically on the very same day that news broke in Washington, D.C. about a pamphlet, printed and distributed at taxpayer expense, that told people with HIV/AIDS that "Jesus is our hope!"

Bush's speech was not an official State of the Union address – that will come next year. But given its prominence, it may as well have been one. And as far as federal activity is concerned, the state of the GLBT movement is not good. Hate crimes and non-discrimination legislation are stalled in Congress both because of the intransigence of the conservative House leadership and because of the lack of interest on the part of the Bush administration.

Some of the most devastating discrimination we in the GLBT community face is at the hands of our own government. The federal government treats us as second-class citizens and neither Bush nor his conservative colleagues in Congress propose to do anything about this.

While I listened to Bush's speech, I found myself thinking of two counties that quietly moved forward recently – Merrimack County in New Hampshire and James City County in Virginia.

With absolutely no fanfare or publicity, each county recently adopted a sexual orientation non-discrimination policy for county

employees. In the case of James City County, this policy was enacted unanimously by a Board of Supervisors that is comprised of four Republicans and one Democrat.

While it might appear at first glance unusual that two counties in New Hampshire and Virginia would take such measures, they are hardly alone. More than 150 towns, cities, and counties now have measures that ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and in some instances, gender identity. These entities range in size from tiny Sorrento, Maine, with a population of 355, to New York City, with more than 7 million people.

And as we assess the state of the states, we see a flurry of state legislative activity – some bad, but more good – that demonstrates just how out of touch Bush and his conservative colleagues in Congress are when they ignore our needs.

As I write this, advances are being made in every part of the country in such areas as hate crimes, civil rights, recognition of GLBT families, domestic partnership benefits, education and safe schools, and health care. Examples of bills that have momentum and stand a very real chance of passing this year are:

• In New York, the New York Assembly passed the Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act on a strong 113-33 vote. The bill now goes to the Republican Senate for a vote. If it survives, New York will become the 12th state to pass a civil rights measure that bans discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

• In Texas, both House and Senate committees have passed hate crimes legislation that would add sexual orientation to the state's hate crimes law and would make it

more enforceable. If the bill becomes law, Texas would become the 22nd state to adopt hate crimes legislation that includes sexual orientation. While Texas acts on this important bill, Bush and the Congress sleep.

• In California, legislation is anticipated that would add gender identity to the state's anti-discrimination law covering employment and housing.

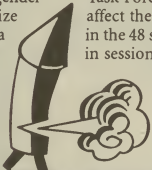
All in all, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force is tracking 311 bills that could affect the GLBT or HIV/AIDS community in the 48 state legislatures that currently are in session. Of these bills, a slight majority are favorable.

Of course, dark clouds dot the horizon. Possible ballot initiatives that attack our community are taking shape this year in Houston, Dade County, Michigan, and Washington. We continue to fight mean-spirited and anti-

GLBT legislation that would ban same-sex marriages and, in some cases, same-sex civil unions, and would prevent gay and lesbian people from adopting children. We continue to monitor a determined and entrenched religious right political movement that sees anti-GLBT legislation and ballot initiatives as an organizing and fundraising tool.

But with public opinion and the inevitable march of civil rights history on our side, we will make advances this year and the next and the year after that. And perhaps by the time that Bush seeks re-election three years from now, he will come to understand that he ignores the GLBT community at his own political peril. ▼

Elizabeth Toledo is executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.



## Guest Opinion

## LETTERS

## A civil rights group?

Who is Bob Roehr trying to kid anyway? In his article about John Ashcroft meeting with gays [March 1], he refers to the Log Cabin Republicans as a civil rights organization.

In pursuing their own narrow self-interest, most Republicans – including the elitist gay and lesbian dilettantes among them – align themselves with the oppressive policies of their party: attacks on women's rights; immigrant-bashing; opposition to affirmative action; support for so-called welfare reform that deprives women and children of income, nutrition, and health care; and support for an illegal genocidal war that slaughtered 2 million Nicaraguan and Salvadorian people in the name of free enterprise.

Like most Republicans, the Log Cabin variety doesn't mind paying substandard wages without Social Security payments to immigrant maids, gardeners, and handymen to maintain the pretense of an exclusive lifestyle – but they don't want them to have health care or public schooling for their children.

And Log Cabinites embrace the Republican Party leadership of Trent Lott, Dennis Hastert, and Jesse Helms – all of whom identify with organizations having racial covenants.

Thanks for the civil rights lesson. When they come to take us away in box-cars, try telling them you're a Log Cabin Republican. Maybe they'll let you sit up front.

John Caton  
San Francisco

## Disgusted by Elton-Eminem duet

I was disgusted and appalled that Elton John performed a duet with Eminem at the Grammys. It was a slap in the face to the gay community. Sure, you have a right to freedom of expression; that freedom stops when you spew hate. Eminem is singing hateful lyrics about women and gays. The use of the word "faggot" bothers me the most. It is a hate word.

Only 30 people protested outside the Staples Center. What happened folks? Where is your anger against this homophobic bigot? I would have been there, but I live more than 400 miles away, and am dealing with health issues. For those of you that do believe this is "hate music," boycott his music. Don't buy his CDs. Write his record company. And for you, Elton John, that was a stupid looking pink circus outfit you had on.

Scott Sproat  
Concord, California

## D'Anne booted from event

I respect the progressive stands Chris Daly is taking as supervisor. I just wonder if he is undermining his progressive credentials by allowing a fundraising benefit that has sponsors that reads like a who's who of the very forces he is fighting. Or as someone said the "Brownites."

Credit for this fundraising party goes to Frederick Hobson, the notorious manipulator in the Brown camp, former supporter of candidate Chris Dittnerhafer, and a pitifully vindictive person. He called me to tell me not to show up at the fundraiser because I was elected to the board of the Alliance for a Better District 6. Hobson might have added that no poor folk should attend either. They could not possibly afford to go to this party, especially since it occurred at the end of the month when most people's funds are low.

Daly should have taken a principled stand against allowing or participating in a fundraiser that will have the appearance of compromising his ethics and progressive policies.

As for hooking up with Hobson, Daly better watch how the wind blows.

Denise D'Anne  
San Francisco

## TIC legislation needed

Gary Goad's letter on TICs (last week's B.A.R.) contained misinformation that needs to be corrected. First of all, Chris Daly's TIC legislation is former Supervisor Sue Bierman's legislation, not Proposition N; I wish this were Proposition N. Daly's legislation is weaker than Proposition N. It does not include two-unit buildings and it will condo-convert all existing TICs. I urge the board to amend the legislation to include two-unit buildings.

The other lie is that the legislation is anti-queer couples. Believe me, as a 30-year queer activist I would never support anti-queer legislation. Many queer activists in town support this legislation. Regarding queer couples: the legislation does not ban TICs, it brings them under the condo-conversion law. The law still allows queer couples to form TICs, and it allows domestic partners to evict just as partners of straight couples can.

Let's be real about something: TICs are cannibalism. They provide bogus home ownership to one group at the expense of another group (that gets evicted). When one owns a TIC, one owns a percentage of a building, not a home. The real-estate speculator who sells the TIC makes tons of money. And that's the real motivation here. Realtors are not trying

to provide housing, they are lining their own pockets.

I support people's right to home ownership but not on the backs of other tenants, especially the elderly. The bottom line: TICs are bad for dogs and bad for tenants. If they're good for anyone, it's real-estate speculators, including the queer ones.

Tommi Avicolli Mecca  
San Francisco

## TIC homeowner speaks out

As a TIC homeowner in District 8, before voting last November, I contacted Supervisor Mark Leno's office to find out his stance on Proposition N. Supervisor Leno's campaign office replied, telling me that he opposed Proposition N. I then moved forward and cast my vote.

Now, newcomer Chris Daly, is proposing legislation limiting the sale of tenancies-in-common. I am once again asking, why? Remember, Proposition N was shot down by the voters.

This TIC issue is one that is very close to me. My partner and I, and many of our friends (many of whom live in District 8) were able to purchase a home in this city through TIC agreements. TICs are one way for people to become long-term owners instead of long-term renters. Owners often take better care of maintaining their property which in turn helps to maintain a positive appearance in our city.

Chris Daly should be looking for ways to clean up his district. Many of the homes in the SOMA area appear to be extremely run down and shabby looking.

Years ago, the city leaders and the rent board were screaming renter, renter, just as Daly is doing today, and now look at the mess this city is in. If Supervisor Daly moves forward with his opposition to TICs, the housing situation is only going to get worse.

James J. Cassiol  
San Francisco

## Left is rotted out

The *New York Times* recently exposed an interesting angle to Pardongate. The Reverend Jesse Jackson got President Clinton to pardon a buddy of his, a former Democratic congressman. His buddy was doing time for corruption and having sex with an underage campaign worker. Jackson also got Clinton to grant clemency to a former official of his Operation PUSH. She was doing time for embezzling \$1 million in federal aid for homeless children.

These national developments have local echoes. Mayor Willie Brown has become a magnet for crooks who will do anything to make a quick buck. Supervisor Tom Ammann has become a magnet for kooks who want to push their narrow views of political correctness on everybody else. District Attorney Terence Hallinan has become the darling of the city's drug dealers.

Our local left has three pied pipers, when one alone would be disaster enough. At the same time, the national right is smart, focused, and energetic, and at this very moment ominously consolidating its power in Washington.

What is to be done? First, let's frankly acknowledge that the left is rotted out, both locally and at the national level. Second, let's begin building the left anew, step by step from the bottom up, cutting out what is rotten, building on what is good. Finally, let's re-ground the left on the practical, common sense realities of the majority of ordinary citizens.

The well-being of our community may depend on it.

Arthur Evans  
San Francisco

## One name, two companies

I read Jim Provenzano's column concerning the biography of WCW wrestler Bill Goldberg in the March 1 issue and feel compelled to correct two key elements in the piece.

Mr. Provenzano refers to Crown Books and Crown Publishing interchangeably. They are, in fact, completely separate entities and are not related in any way. Crown Books is a discount bookseller that is presently in Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings. Crown Publishing is a successful, profitable part of the vast Bertelsmann/Random House publishing empire.

In addition, Mr. Provenzano makes reference to two titles and suggests that Crown Publishing is failing. This, too, is erroneous; Crown has a large, varied portfolio of respected authors and titles. The most prominent examples of the breadth of their offerings are books by Martha Stewart, Jonathan Kozol, and Dominick Dunne. The company has been in business for over 50 years.

Clearly, Mr. Provenzano needs to research his work more thoroughly before he submits it for publication.

Mark Boorstein  
San Francisco

[Jim Provenzano responds: Thanks to Mr. Boorstein for coming to the defense of a maligned conglomerate, as if anything owned by the "vast Bertelsmann/Random House empire" is a separate entity.]

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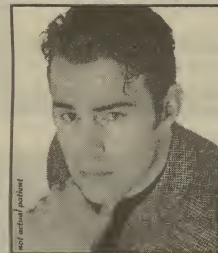
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# A shot in the arm for transgender rights

by Gwendolyn Ann Smith

There has been a lot of talk in the media lately about transgender health care. This column will be no exception.

By now, you have probably heard that things are on track for the city and county of San Francisco to approve health benefits for city workers undergoing transsexual procedures. It's a very big deal, and makes San Francisco the only place in this country willing to take such a bold step. It's

also led to plenty of those "only in San Francisco" comments floating around the press.

I always find "only in San Francisco" to be an interesting phrase, and doubly so in this case. I simply cannot understand why the concept of providing fair treatment to a group of people should be an "only in San Francisco" event, and one that is held up as little more than a joke.

It really makes me wonder what lies behind some of the press on this health benefits proposal. Do some of the pundits seriously expect me to believe that hordes of transgendered people are set to descend on San Francisco, intending to make off with some sort of "special rights" coverage that will benefit transgendered people in favor of the needs of the non-transgendered?

San Francisco stands poised to make a bold statement about basic civil rights. Given the city's history of providing equal rights for its citizens, making sure that city workers have equal access to health care seems like a perfectly reasonable action to take.

You may be a little confused as to how making sure that city-employed transsexuals can get surgery is an example of providing equal rights. Let me explain: if a city employee were to face breast cancer, they would be eligible to have a mastectomy covered under their benefits package. But if that same person were to require a mastectomy due to being a female-to-male transsexual, then that procedure would have to come out of their own pocket: by making a particular identification, a transgendered person instantly becomes ineligible for benefits that are freely given to those who are not transgendered.

I'm not a city employee, but I do note that every health plan I've been on has included a basic exclusion against any transgendered health coverage. Transsexual surgeries are routinely discounted, labeled as "cosmetic" or "experimental." I have yet to understand how this is considered experimental, given that the first modern vaginoplasty (the creation of a neo-vagina and surrounding structures) was performed in 1931, and the first modern phalloplasty (the surgical formation of a penis) dates back to 1948.

Certainly, after more than 50 years, it has to be something other than experimental. You can probably guess my feelings about considering transsexual surgeries as "cosmetic."

But the standard exclusions go much further than just genital surgery and hormone treatments.

They can go so far as to exclude anything that can be tied to transgenderism. If someone does indeed get vaginoplasty, then develops health complications that can even remotely be tied to that vaginoplasty—then their insurer can avoid paying on that claim. That's just not right.

Frankly, it is things like the above that have kept me out of a lot of doctor's offices. I don't need to have my physical ailments to magically be linked into my transgenderism, simply to make sure that my insurer doesn't need to pay an otherwise valid claim.

It is important to note that the coverage planned for San Francisco isn't something that will "spare no expense." It includes a cap of \$50,000 per person, for life. It also requires the patient to cover anywhere from 15-50 percent of the cost of surgery, rather than paying for it all. This covers a lot of needs, but does keep things from going overboard.

It also requires that a person work for the city for a minimum of one year before they are eligible to take advantage of these benefits.

I find it curious that, if you were to believe some of the news reports on these benefits, you might suspect that a flood of city-

employed transgendered people are going to rush off to their doctor for a quick "nip and tuck." This isn't exactly the case.

From the estimates of the Transgender Civil Rights Implementation Task Force, there are a mere dozen people employed with the city who identify as transsexual. Of those, approximately half have already handled their surgical needs, or do not desire surgery. So this leaves, at current, only six people who would be using these benefits to get some form of transsexual-related surgery. Hardly the droves of people that some have indicated.

Of course, this brings up one of my pet peeves: why does the city only have 12 transsexual-identified employees out of a work force of around 28,000 people? Seems to be small numbers when compared to the estimated 16,000 transgendered people within the city. Of course, maybe knowing that San Francisco will provide equal medical coverage will draw more qualified transgender applicants to apply.

I can't stress that more: we're not talking about city-

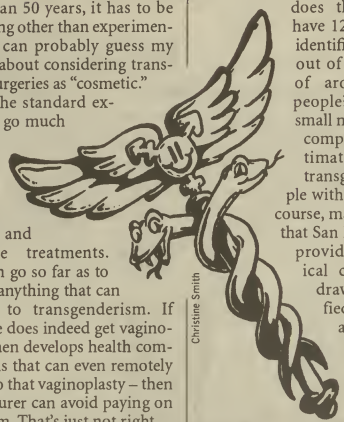
employed transsexuals getting so-called "special rights." We're talking about health care, which is a basic civil right. And we're talking about equal coverage for equal work. Neither of these seem like difficult concepts to grasp, do they?

So when these benefits come up to a vote by the Board of Supervisors and approval by the mayor, I trust our leaders will strike a blow for equal rights, and make the city and county of San Francisco a proud model that other cities can follow.

Hey—maybe there is something to this being an "only in San Francisco" happening after all. ▼

Gwen Smith will never ask you to turn your head and cough. She can be found on the web in Gay.com's "Transgender Gazebo," and at [www.gwensmith.com](http://www.gwensmith.com).

## Transmissions



Christine Smith

## '100 dates in one night!'

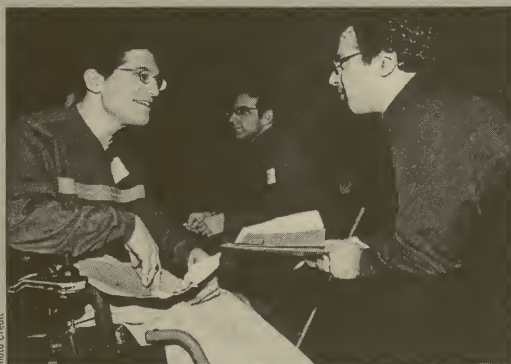


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Express dating came to San Francisco's Congregation Sha'ar Zahav last month when GLBT Jewish singles schmoozed with each other. Danny Kodmur, far left, got to know Michael Schwartz during one of many ice-breakers designed to get potential couples talking. Dates were given a set of suggested questions about personal tastes and values along with a sheet to keep track of which prospective soul mates they might want to connect with later. For information on possible similar events in the future, call (415) 861-6932.

## POLITICS

# Redistricting is the name of Sacto game

by Wayne Friday

One of the most intense political events to take place this year in Sacramento will be the redistricting of congressional, state Senate, and Assembly districts. Due to reapportionment, California will gain one House seat, bringing the state delegation to 53 members.

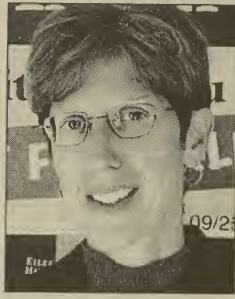
To politicians, officeholders, and would-be officeholders, redistricting and reapportionment are all about power. In California—with its top-heavy majorities in both the state Senate and Assembly, and with a Democrat in the Statehouse poised to approve what most assume will be Democratic-favored redistricting lines—that control this time around goes to the Democrats. Bluntly speaking, California Republicans are most likely resigned to the worst of political scenarios. Though the real redistricting moves must wait until detailed census data becomes available in a few months, those in charge of the process—again, Democrats—are already gearing up for what could be a power move. Such a move could not only determine future control of the U.S. House of Representatives, but also which politicians get the best chance to advance up the political ladder, and which party likely keeps control of state government at least until the next census rolls around.

San Francisco, with its two Assembly seats, is said to already be considered in the political mix of redistricting. One report that I keep hearing is that state Senate President **John Burton**, with an eye toward the next S.F. mayoral contest (Burton is serving his final term in the Senate and Mayor **Willie Brown** is in his final term) is reportedly thinking of a way to somehow redraw Assembly District 12, now held by **Kevin Shelley**, so that the district would extend further into the City's east side. Then, Supervisor **Gavin Newsom**, often mentioned as a mayoral candidate, would be able to run for the Assembly the next time around, eliminating Newsom as one possible opponent for would-be mayor.

Exactly how that move might sit with other San Francisco political groups remains to be seen, particularly in the light of the fact that Superior Court Judge **Lillian K. Sing**, a popular figure in the Chinese American community, has all but announced her candidacy for the 12th District seat. Supervisor **Leland Yee** is reportedly telling friends and supporters he, too, is looking at a possible race in that district, and there surely will be others, some with good name identification.

Both Assemblyman Shelley, whose 12th District seat currently covers roughly the West side of San Francisco, or the left part of the city (as well as a small slice of San Mateo County), and Assemblywoman **Carole Migden**, whose 13th District now covers most of the East side of San Francisco, or the right side of the city, are serving their final terms in the Assembly, thanks, of course, to the idiotic term limits.

Among those said to be interested in succeeding Migden in the 13th District are Board of Supervisors President **Tom Ammiano**, Supervisor **Mark Leno**, and several other candidates. One report I heard—twice—over the weekend was that former District 8 supe candidate **Eileen Hansen** is



Eileen Hansen

thinking of entering the District 13 race as well (does Ammiano know about this?).

And in the event that the redrawing of District 12 were to make the race for Assembly a bit more appealing for Newsom, Burton could expect to have some tough—very tough—competition if he wants to replace Mayor Brown. Former Supervisors **Angela Alioto** and **Barbara Kaufman**, former mayoral candidate **Clint**

**Reilly**, Migden, Shelley, and former Mayor **Art Agnos** are just some of the names being mentioned for the next mayoral contest. Stay tuned; this one could be fun.

## Politics and people

Meanwhile, city Treasurer **Susan Leal** looks like a shoo-in for another term this November, and although prominent attorney **Neil Eisenberg** had told me twice in the past few weeks he is "seriously" considering a run for City Attorney **Louise Renne's** job, I wouldn't bet on it.

Hey, I follow the Board of Supes meetings on TV too, and from where I sit three of the hardest working new supervisors appear to be **Chris Daly**, **Sophie Maxwell**, and **Aaron Peskin**, while more than a few continue to ask "how did that guy with the 37-vote win ever make it to the board?" Just repeating the comments I hear, folks.

Observers watching the upcoming April 10 Los Angeles mayoral election are saying that City Council member **Joel Wachs**, the openly gay candidate, appears to be polling very well and likely will make it into the mayoral runoff with L.A. City Attorney **Jim Hahn**.

In the event that GOP banker **William E. Simon Jr.** does become a Republican candidate for governor next year he likely will be asked about that \$2,000 political contribution he made to Democrat **Kathleen Brown** when she ran against Republican incumbent Governor **Pete Wilson** in 1994.

And, another rumored GOP guy hopeful, actor **Arnold Schwarzenegger** is getting an early, albeit rude indoctrination into the world of California poli-

tics. No sooner had Schwarzenegger floated himself as a possible candidate than Governor **Gray Davis's** political operatives dug up a hit piece on the muscle-boy actor from the current issue of *Premiere* magazine, a movie mag that claims the 53-year-old action star has pig valves in his heart and accuses him of swinish behavior toward women. Davis's top strategist immediately made sure the magazine piece, as well as two other related tabloid stories, made their way to political news desks around the state. The fax cover sheet was entitled "AH-nuhld's Piggish Behavior," and continued with "here's the *Premiere* exposé on might-be gubernatorial wannabe AH-nuhld; this piece lays out a real 'touching' story."

Will he never learn? GOP House Majority Leader **Dick Armey** of Texas (who once called Massachusetts Democratic Representative **Barney Frank** "Barney Fag" on the House floor) stuck his foot in his mouth again last week. Armey wrote a letter to NAACP accusing the civil rights organization of "racial McCarthyism." Armey, never a civil rights advocate, and certainly never one for gay rights, criticized the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People by citing an ad run by the National Vote Fund, an organization affiliated with the NAACP, that attacked **George W. Bush** during the campaign for indifference to the Texas dragging murder of **James Byrd Jr.** by three white supremacists. Armey also accused the NAACP of inciting racially divisive protests over Florida's voting irregularities.

Speaking of which, for the caller who gloated "I told you so" after the *Miami Herald* issued its "results" of the Miami-Dade vote recount, here are some things you might want to think about: I realize the Republicans have rushed to use the *Miami Herald* results from Miami-Dade County to justify their illegitimate president, but these same people ignore the very fact that **Al Gore** picked up 682 votes in Palm Beach, which, if allowed to be used in the final tally, would have given the state to the former vice president. The *Herald* report also does not take into account that at this time the statewide recount has Gore up by over 1,000 votes. And, though the Florida Supreme Court ordered a statewide recount, Bush was declared the winner only after the U.S. Supreme Court halted a Florida recount that many experts say would have easily erased Bush's 537-vote win. Further, last week a Florida task force seeking ways to prevent a repeat of the election fiasco urged the state Legislature to adopt a uniform statewide system of voting and recounting and, most importantly, to bar election officials themselves from working on individual campaigns. That same nonpartisan panel said outmoded equipment and the lack of any uniform standard for recounting contested ballots resulted in more than 180,000 votes being thrown out across the state of Florida. The fact remains, dear reader, that the only vote count that was actually won by Bush took place in the U.S. Supreme Court. Unfortunately for democracy and honest elections, that was also the only

next page ►

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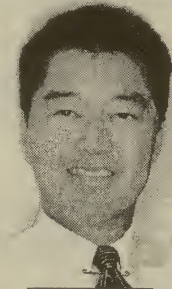
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## Gay Cuba libre!

by Dale Carpenter

Just when you reflect on how bad things have been for gays in the United States, something reminds you how much worse it could be. Not long ago, a small town in Mexico barred "dogs and homosexuals" from the local beach. President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe has banned gays from his country's book fairs and publicly calls us "dogs." In some Islamic countries, homosexual acts still are punishable by death. It puts in perspective Congress' failure to pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act.

Now comes the Oscar-nominated film *Before Night Falls* to expose the horrific denial of individual rights in Cuba since Fidel Castro seized power 42 years ago. A few stalwart admirers of Castro in the U.S. have demonstrated against the film (which is, if anything, too easy on the dictator). One protester told a newspaper that, while he hadn't actually seen the movie, he had been informed it contained "lies" about Cuba. The irony is that such unauthorized protest in Cuba itself would have landed him in jail.

Directed by Julian Schnabel, *Before Night Falls* chronicles the life of the gay Cuban writer Reinaldo Arenas (played superbly by Javier Bardem). Arenas, born into poverty in 1948, initially supported the Cuban revolution with its promises of free education and medical care. His first book even won a prize from Castro's cultural watchdogs.

But the romance of revolution soon died. One of the regime's first acts was to prohibit assemblies of more than three people. The news media quickly came under state control. The government recruited a network of spies in neighborhoods across the country to report dissident activity. Those who dared to criticize the government — even if they were generally sympathetic to communism — were imprisoned. Denounced as "counter-revolutionaries," some were forced to admit guilt for their political

"crimes" against the state in show trials worthy of Stalin.

The Castro regime has also been ferociously anti-gay. As early as 1965, the Cuban government began sending homosexuals to prison farms and labor camps where they were brutally mistreated. According to early gay-rights activist Frank Kameny, newspaper accounts of these camps triggered the first pickets in front of the White House by gays, who held up signs asking, "Cuba persecutes gays; Is the U.S. much better?" Repression in Cuba was thus used to shame the U.S. government into treating gays more tolerantly.



OutRight

Nevertheless, in the 1960s and 1970s Castro had his devotees among Americans who can gay civil rights activists allied with the New Left. Some even went annually to Cuba as part of the "Venceremos Brigade" (VB) to help harvest the country's sugar cane crop.

While assistance was welcome, officials openly worried about the inclusion of gay Americans in the VB. A 1972 policy statement described gay Americans as "particularly dangerous at this time because they join a cultural imperialist offensive against the Cuban revolution."

The same policy statement denounced homosexuality within the country as "a social pathology which reflects leftover bourgeois decadence" that "has no place in the formation of the New Man which Cuba is building." In other words, homosexuality was an artifact of capitalism that had to be purged.

Arenas himself felt this turn of the screws. As an associate informed him, the Castro government distrusted artists and writers because they create beauty and totalitarians cannot control beauty. Arenas's work was soon censored by authorities. He was forced to rely on literary admirers to smuggle his manuscripts out of the country for publication. Arenas and his circle of gay intellectual friends were closely watched by informers and frequently harassed by police.

Before long, Arenas was imprisoned on false charges of mo-

lesting a child. After managing to escape, he was captured and returned to prison, where he was tortured and placed in solitary confinement.

Such experiences have not been unusual for gay Cubans under Castro's rule. In 1970, an anonymous group of gay Cubans managed to sneak out a letter to gay civil rights activists in the United States. In the letter, they revealed how Cuban authorities persecuted gays through methods ranging from "physical attack to attempts to impose psychic and moral disintegration upon gay people." These facts, the letter noted, were "quite in contradiction with the success stories being told abroad" by some of Castro's left-wing gay apologists.

Of course, life for gays in the U.S. was no picnic in the 1960s and early 1970s. But the deprivations, punishments, and denials of basic liberties in Cuba went far beyond anything experienced here. As the gay Cubans' letter concluded: "If in a consumption society, run by capitalists and oligarchs, like the one you are living in, homosexuals experience suffering and limitations, in our society, labeled Marxist and revolutionary, it is worse."

Arenas tried desperately to escape his nightmarish country, once attempting unsuccessfully to float to Florida on an inner tube. Others have used makeshift rafts and even balloons for the same purpose. Arenas himself finally fled to the United States during the 1980 Mariel boat-lift along with thousands of other "criminals," including many gay Cubans, released by Castro.

So while we bemoan the remaining barriers to full equality in the U.S., we are fortunate to live in a country where the basic guarantees of free speech, free press, assembly, and due process apply even to us. As bad as it might seem sometimes, nobody is jumping on driftwood in the open seas to get out. ▼

Dale Carpenter, a law professor, is the winner of three Vice Versa awards for excellence in gay writing. He can be reached at [OutRight@aol.com](mailto:OutRight@aol.com).

## Our Man Friday

◀ previous page

vote that really counted in this presidential election.

San Francisco friends of **Margaret Reagan** are said to be very concerned about the health of the 60-year-old presidential daughter. Reagan, who has a lot of friends in the city, suffers from cancer, and has been hospitalized since December 11 at the John Wayne Cancer Institute in Santa Monica. Last week she started yet another series of aggressive chemotherapy treatments. Ms. Reagan and her husband, **Dennis Revell**, live in Sacramento and visit San Francisco regularly, often going to the theatre and enjoying the city's restaurants.

Former first daughter **Chelsea Clinton** will graduate from Stanford this June and those close to the Clintons' only offspring say she is then likely headed to England's Oxford University where her dad studied.

And you likely didn't see this one on the front page, but an 18-year-old Texas Christian University freshman, who claims to be the boyfriend of President Bush's

daughter, **Jenna**, was arrested at a frat party last week in Fort Worth and quietly released several hours later to a man whom sheriff's deputies believe to be a Secret Service agent. **William Ashe Bridges** was jailed February 25 after officers arrested him at a house near the Fort Worth campus; Bridges was cited for public intoxication and under-age possession of alcohol and was released after four hours. While in jail he loudly proclaimed to be Jenna's boyfriend. Neither the White House nor the Secret Service had any comment.

At City Hall, those who think Mayor Brown has become a "lame duck" mayor should think again. The mayor, always seemingly busy, this week hosted a highly-touted "crime summit" at Herbst Theatre which featured high-profile speakers such as former Deputy Attorney General **Eric Holder**, California Attorney General **Bill Lockyer**, **David M. Kennedy**, a senior researcher at Harvard's School of Government, Police Chief **Fred Lau**, and other top law enforcement officials. Those watching Brown say he keeps up a schedule that a person

half his age could barely handle as he takes on the final three years of his mayoral duties.

Most gay and lesbian activists from Marin County who follow the political scene there are saying that the ill-timed recall campaign against their district attorney, **Paula Kamena**, is an exercise in futility and a waste of time and public money. Those gay and lesbian activists I hear from in Marin say that Kamena is an excellent public servant and are urging a "no" vote on the May 22 recall effort.

And finally, while it's been only four months since the last presidential election, the fact that Delaware U.S. Senator **Joseph Biden** (D) announced this week he will be attending a St. Patrick's Day celebration in Manchester, New Hampshire, while another 2004 presidential possibility, Senator **John Edwards** (D-North Carolina), also the Senate's finest looking male member, will visit Iowa this weekend, signals that the next presidential campaign is already getting under way. Both New Hampshire and Iowa, I point out, are among those states hosting early presidential contests in 2004.

And how was your week? ▼

## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Isn't it romantic

by Jane Warner

**2** 223 Restaurant, 2223 Market Street, March 3, 10:55 p.m.: Two men eating dinner at the restaurant began to argue about the bill. One man became angry and pointed his finger at his acquaintance, then stuck the assaulting digit in his acquaintance's mouth. The other man, feeling threatened, bit the man's finger, causing it to bleed. The injured man wiped his bleeding finger on the other man's jacket and face. Causing quite a disturbance among other patrons, management asked the pair to leave. The men took their argument outside where the injured man pushed the other man several times and then fled across Market. The man who bit the other man filed a police report and said he intended to press charges.

## Still friends

300 block of Eureka, February 27, 11:45 p.m.: A woman who was away for the weekend returned home to find her house burglarized. Discovered missing was a stereo system, \$1,000 worth of computer software, her medical license, the deed to the house, and several banking slips. A short time later, she received a threatening phone call from her former domestic partner who had watched her dog while she was gone. The ex stated she would return the documents but was keeping the stereo system. Police filed a burglary report, listing the former domestic partner as the primary suspect.



## Subtlety

300 block of Guerrero, February 26, 11:29 p.m.: Awakened by his doorbell ringing, a man opened the door to a woman who screamed that his house was on fire. The man ran out of his home and saw a burning trail of fire on his driveway leading to his garage door. Fire trucks quickly responded and doused the flames before they could spread. Responding police officers saw a man running from the fire and gave chase, following him onto a Muni bus. Upon seeing the officers board, the man spontaneously turned and asked, "Are you detaining me for suspicion of arson?" Based on the man's

knowledge of the fire and the fact that he was running from the scene, the suspect was taken to Mission Station for investigation. Upon a search of his pockets, two match books and a used match fell to the floor. The man attempted to kick them away, stating, "That's just garbage, don't put that with my stuff." The 27-year-old suspect was booked for arson.

## Off guard

100 block of Dolores, February 27, 9:25 p.m.: Two men and a woman were walking southbound on Dolores when suddenly two of them were grabbed from behind and forced to the ground. The assailants went through the victims' pockets, taking loose change and some house keys. The robbers, described as a white female and African American male, ran north on Dolores and then east on 14th Street where they got into a silvery blue passenger van that sped eastbound on 14th. The victims were shaken but uninjured. Officers were unable to find the suspects or the blue van. ▼

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# Roanoke shooting suspect says all gays should move to SF

by Ed Walsh

**T**he man accused of opening fire in a Roanoke, Virginia gay bar last September, killing one man and wounding six others, says all gays should move to San Francisco.

In a rambling letter to the *Roanoke Times*, Ronald Gay was reacting to a series of reports the paper recently published on gay life in the Roanoke area.

"When I am gone, another will take my place," he wrote in the diatribe received by the paper last Friday, March 2. Gay didn't admit guilt but said of gays that "their meeting places and bars will be destroyed with them" if they don't move to "their city," San Francisco.

Gay called himself a "Christian Soldier working for my Lord" in the letter that the paper calls "nearly indecipherable."

Gay, 55, wrote that "Jesus does not want these people in his heaven," and that homosexual meeting places should be "burnt to kill" the AIDS virus "or slow it down."

The paper reported that Gay "accused homosexuals of engaging in pedophilia and promiscuity and other sexually deviant behavior."

Gay's discomfort over homosexuality is apparently echoed by many in the Roanoke area. More than 350 *Roanoke Times* readers

canceled their subscriptions in protest after the paper ran its four-part series on gay life.

One of Gay's victims told the *Bay Area Reporter* that he was outraged over Gay's remarks.

"I don't know who his Lord is but it's not one that I believe in," said Joel Tucker, who was shot in back. "He better open his eyes because there are a lot of us out here."

Tucker is fully recovered from the shooting and said he was very lucky because the bullet narrowly missed his spinal column. Although Tucker was able to return to work two days after the attack, as a precaution, doctors waited two weeks before they removed the bullet.

Gay faces trial in May for the murder of 43-year-old Danny Lee Overstreet and the wounding of six others at the Backstreet Café shooting. Police say Gay harbored a long-simmering anger over being teased about his last name.

Tucker told the B.A.R. he's disappointed that Gay didn't meet any of the special circumstances required under Virginia law to receive the death penalty but he pointed out the irony that if Gay is convicted, he likely will get a life sentence in state prison, where gay sex is rampant.

"When they get him in there and find out what he did, they'll change his name to Ronda Gay," said Tucker with a chuckle.

Tucker said he appreciated the money that was donated in various fundraisers to the victims. He donated back the money that was earmarked for him to those who were more seriously injured. He pointed out that a woman who had been shot in the head still has not been able to return to work.

Tucker told the B.A.R. that he is preparing to testify against Gay during the trial in May and said it will be difficult to face him in court.

"I have a lot of anger toward that man. He didn't know me from Adam, or any of those people, for that matter," he said adding that many people go to the Backstreet Café who are not gay.

Tucker and other friends of Overstreet say they'll always remember his kind, gentle, and upbeat disposition. His sister, Darlene Overstreet, told the B.A.R. that he briefly lived in the Bay Area and often visited here. She said she greatly appreciated the prayers and messages of sympathy from San Francisco because it had been one of Overstreet's favorite places.

Tucker himself plans to visit San Francisco next month but no doubt the change of scene will do little to allay his anger and anticipation over having to come face-to-face again with the man who is charged with killing Overstreet and nearly took his own life last September. ▼

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## Easter grants

◀ page 2

cepting proposals for the best way to spend their gift of \$5,000, to be distributed in grants of up to \$500 each. To qualify for the grants, applicants must be California-registered 501(c)(3) organizations and be able to show specific need, such as start-up costs, program incentives, direct service costs, and scholarships. Grants are not awarded for salaries, general operating ex-

penses, travel, or an individual's project.

Historically, the Sisters have given grants to under-funded, smaller organizations providing direct services that promote wellness, identity, and diversity within the queer communities. The word queer, according to the Sisters, can mean any community that is stereotyped or faces discrimination and violence based on narrow gender and sexual orientation definitions. Groups most likely to win a grant from the Sisters would have a common

interest in human rights, people of every gender, gender identity, race, class, age, and sexual orientation.

More information about the Sisters' Easter grants and what proposals should include is available at [www.thesisters.org](http://www.thesisters.org). Completed proposals should be sent to the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, Inc., Grants Committee, 584 Castro Street, PMB #392, San Francisco, CA 94114. Easter grants will be presented at the Sisters' 22nd anniversary Easter Picnic in Dolores Park on Sunday, April 15. ▼



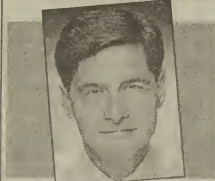
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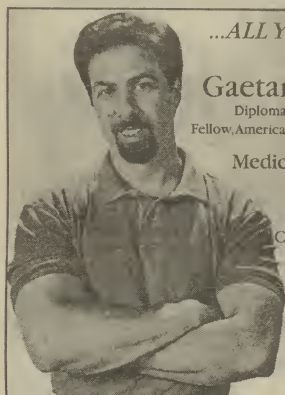


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# Redistricting has a lavender cast

by Bob Roeher

Most of the nation's boundary lines for political office will be redrawn over the next year or so to reflect population shifts captured in the 2000 census. How those lines are drawn may affect which political party has a majority in city councils, state legislatures, and even in Congress.

It also could mean the difference between success or failure for homophobic and openly gay or lesbian candidate alike, and could determine whether gay-friendly legislation is passed.

The Policy Institute of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force recently issued a 42-page "strategy memo" to help local activists participate in the redistricting process. It is called "Redistricting and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Community." A central admonition is to work in coalition with other progressive groups to create districts that can elect progressive candidates.

There are two broad goals in politics, said Ken Sherrill, professor of political science at Hunter University in New York and an expert in gay politics. One is the election of openly LGBT candidates, because "the ability to impact setting the agenda is a function of being in the room." The other is to elect supportive candi-

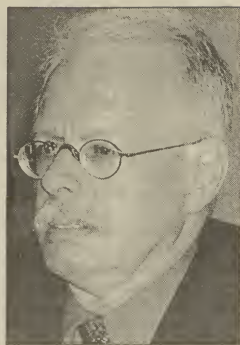
dates.

A classic tension in drawing lines is whether it is better to try to "pack" as many of your community into a single district with the intent of creating a "safe" seat, or spread them so that the community has a strong influence in a greater number of districts.

Sherrill said that the logic of drawing lines to represent racial and ethnic minorities does not necessarily apply when it comes to gays and lesbians. First, unlike most areas with a majority of minority residents, even those neighborhoods identified as "gay" seldom have a majority of the population that is gay or lesbian.

Furthermore, the boundaries of those neighborhoods can "shift rather remarkably." He used the examples of Greenwich Village and Chelsea where 25 years ago the former was very gay while the latter was not particularly gay at all. But that has reversed, in part because gays tend to pioneer in changing neighborhoods and subsequent generations simply cannot afford or choose not to buy into those neighborhoods. "So drawing lines for us is tricky," said Sherrill.

"The community needs to re-



Ken Sherrill

sist the temptation to pigeonhole itself," said Sloan Wiesen, spokesman for the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund. Gay and lesbian candidates have been successful by "reaching out to a broad cross section of voters, demonstrating their shared values and concerns." ▼

**Redistricting and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Community: A Strategy Memo**, is available from the NGLTF at: <http://www.nglft.org/downloads/redistrict.pdf> or by calling

# Con artist claims to be Bush gay adviser

by Bob Roeher

Tom Beddingfield, a 22-year-old Republican activist and campaign consultant ... is moving into the Old Executive Office Building, where he will advise the president and other administration officials on gay and lesbian issues," the *Silicon Valley/San Jose Business Journal* reported in its March 5 edition.

"He is so conservative that even the Log Cabin Republicans, a group of gay and lesbian Republicans, don't want to have anything to do with him," the article stated.

Beddingfield gained notoriety last year when he turned in petitions purportedly containing the signatures of 1,000 gays and lesbians in support of the anti-gay marriage California Proposition 22.

He told the *Business Journal* that he had worked on getting John Ashcroft confirmed as U.S. attorney general.

But it appears that Beddingfield's claim is bogus and may be part of a string of embellishments and outright fabrications that he has sold to the community over the last few years.

"I do not know this guy; never heard of this guy; and there is zero, repeat zero, truth in this report," said Charles Francis of the *Business Journal* article.

Francis is a longtime friend of the president who arranged a meeting last April between then-governor and -candidate Bush and a group of gay Republicans. He is chairman of the Republican Unity Coalition, a gay-straight alliance within the Republican Party intent upon making sexual orientation a non-issue. His e-mailed response came after checking with White House officials.

Rich Tafel, executive director of

Log Cabin Republicans, said that he had no recollection of Beddingfield or his participation in their efforts concerning the Ashcroft nomination.

In a 1998 article in *Oasis* magazine, Beddingfield then 19, recounted the tale that first gained him public attention. It was a story of coming out and teen love with enough twists to fill a soap opera. It included the obligatory parental banishment, religious objections, harassment in school, capped by the suicide of his boyfriend Brandon at the age of 16.

This pair of young conservatives in love would attend political events and he claimed to have met not only then-Speaker Newt Gingrich and George Bush, but also President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore. Beddingfield claimed to have delivered this spiel at PFLAG and political meetings across the state of California.

He attributed Brandon's death to his becoming an expert on the *Titanic*, which of course led to his appearance on national television, including *Oprah* and *Late Night With David Letterman*, speaking on that subject.

Perhaps what was most amazing about the long *Oasis* article was that it was entirely in the voice of Beddingfield. No other sources confirmed any of the truly fantastic claims made by a young man with no connections of family or mentors that might have facilitated even a portion of the list of accomplishments on the resume.

And that is a common thread to the three major media appearances of Beddingfield; he has made an assertion and the reporter has simply accepted it. This time he seems to have reached too far. It throws into doubt all of the other claims he has made of his life. ▼

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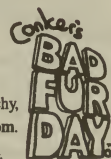


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# Sydney parties during gay Mardi Gras

by S. Predrag

The three-week-long gay and lesbian Mardi Gras festival in Sydney, held under the motto "Out there - everywhere," was not only about partying and celebrating. It also sent a clear message to the Australian government about human rights.

It seems that the 2001 Mardi Gras organizers wanted to get their message across to the government right from the beginning of their festivities.

"The last 12 months have



Brides of Mardi Gras in Sydney

shown that the forces of discrimination and ignorance are strong and sanctioned at the highest level in this country," Mardi Gras President Julie Regan told the crowd of more than 20,000 people who had gathered on February 9 in front of the Opera House when the festival was officially launched.

Regan was particularly critical of the government's legislation against lesbians and gays who want to be parents.

Gay journalist and author David Marr, who was one of the speakers, vigorously attacked not only the local politicians, but also their backers - notably the bishops of the Catholic and Anglican churches.

"The bishops of Sydney's Anglicans and the nation's Catholics are the only people left lobbying politicians to make life for us unfair, uncomfortable, and perhaps illegal," said Marr. He accused the churches of being "the only organizations spreading hatred of homosexuals in Australia."

The first Mardi Gras in Sydney was held on June 24, 1978, as an



The "Beyond the Pink Picket Fence" float at Sydney's Mardi Gras

International Solidarity Day march to commemorate the Stonewall riots in New York of 1969.

The honor of opening this year's festival fell to Marcia Hines and the South African group, After Nines, who were playing in Sydney for the first time.

During the three weeks from February 9 to March 3, Sydney was the world's gay and lesbian cultural and entertainment capital. It attracted thousands of "rainbow people" and tourists from around the world, particularly from the United States, Canada, and Europe.

There was much to see and sample - the theater, art exhibitions, films, a musical festival, and many more festivities, including the spectacle put on by the local Asian community celebrating the Year of the Snake in Darling Harbor.

All these events culminated in the traditional Mardi Gras parade where thousands of gays and les-

bians and their families and friends marched for three hours along the main streets of Sydney.

Organizers claim that up to 175 floats took part in the parade, led by a float called "Beyond the Pink Picket Fence" which consisted of gay fathers and lesbian mothers walking along with their sons and daughters. The organiz-

ers and participants did not miss the opportunity to remind the Australian government that gays and lesbians love their families.

"We love our families and our community and we want to celebrate it," said Cathy Sant, who designed the Pink Picket Fence float in answer to Federal Prime Minister John Howard's claim last year that gay and lesbian families "were not as good as the traditional concept of mother and father."

It is believed that intermittent rain marred the Mardi Gras parade attendance and resulted in smaller crowds than anticipated - not more than 100,000. That figure was drastically less than the totals last year, when Sydney's streets were flooded by an estimated half a million people.

However, according to Regan, "We are not disappointed. We're just glad people had a good time." ▼

## Mining companies fight against AIDS in South Africa

by S. Predrag

Major South African mining companies have started to test miners anonymously for HIV/AIDS in an attempt to develop their own strategy and plan of action against a disease that is threatening to devastate a 500,000-strong work force.

South African mining giant Anglo American has developed an AIDS strategy that seeks to include the provision of antiretroviral therapy for employees with AIDS, according to the *Financial Mail*, a weekly South African newspaper.

It is officially estimated that about 25 percent of half a million miners in South Africa are already HIV-positive. This figure mainly pertains to the semi-skilled and non-skilled workers.

Such a high rate of HIV among the miners, who are mainly from neighboring African countries, is often explained by the fact that their families are left at home and they are forced to live in male hostels near the mines.

As a consequence, they frequently visit prostitutes and are easy prey for the disease which they then transfer to their wives and girlfriends during the holiday season.

At Anglo American, one of the world's largest producers of gold, platinum, and palladium, officials have already concluded that the heavy infection rate among the miners is cause for alarm. The disease will certainly have a serious effect on their productivity, labor costs and skills base.

It is expected that as of the beginning of March, thousands of Anglo American miners in South Africa and Zambia will be tested for HIV/AIDS.

These tests have stirred up some controversy, however, since it was recently revealed that certain South African doctors had disclosed the HIV-positive status of their patients - without consulting them - to their employers.

This was a serious breach of confidentiality, but not one single

doctor has been found guilty in the 28 cases reported by the AIDS Law Project last year due to a "lack of evidence."

The South African government has given up the idea of making AIDS a "notifiable" disease after realizing that "because of the climate of fear and prejudice, people could suffer abuse and serious isolation," officials said.

Two years ago, an AIDS activist, Gugu Dlamini, mother of two children, was stoned to death after she publicly disclosed that she was HIV-positive.

In most African countries, AIDS is still stigmatized, often resulting in intimidation and the eviction of HIV-positive women and children from their local communities.

"People would hesitate to come and be tested if they thought the notification could be tied to them," a Ministry of Health spokesperson said.

Without official notification, experts claim, many South Africans would be encouraged to undergo voluntary testing for the HIV virus without fear of their anonymity being compromised.

"We are afraid that a number of people will be exposed and that will lead to a situation where the community isolates them and they will be hunted out of their jobs because of their HIV status," warned the Congress of South African Trade Unions, a leading workers' federation.

"We urge all affected patients to file lawsuits against doctors who have violated their rights. This should be regarded as a serious offense," said the COSATU statement.

Anglo American and the company's union leadership came to an agreement about testing their miners after the company promised to provide antiretroviral therapy free of charge for employees with AIDS. However, Anglo American conditioned the offer on reaching a deal with drug manufacturers willing to provide antiretrovirals on an affordable and sustainable basis. ▼

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**SAFETY INFORMATION**

Many patients have dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating, and/or unusual dreams a few hours after starting SUSTIVA. They tend to go away after you have taken the medicine for a few weeks. A small number of patients have had severe depression, strange thoughts, or angry behavior. If you have these symptoms, you should contact your doctor immediately to discuss your therapy. There have been a few reports of suicide, but SUSTIVA has not been established as the cause. Mild to moderate rash is a common side effect of SUSTIVA. Women should not become pregnant while taking SUSTIVA, because birth defects have been seen in animals given SUSTIVA. SUSTIVA should not be taken by patients who are also taking any of the following: Hismanal® (astemizole), Propulsid® (cisapride), Versed® (midazolam), Halcion® (triazolam), or ergot derivatives as there is the potential for serious and/or life-threatening side effects.\* See Patient Information about SUSTIVA on the following pages.

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\* The brands listed are registered trademarks of their respective owners and are not trademarks of DuPont Pharmaceuticals Company. References: 1. DPC Study 006, Sustiva/ZDV3TC versus IDV/ZDV3TC. 2. Guidelines for the Use of Antiretroviral Agents in HIV-Infected Adults and Adolescents. Panel on Clinical Practices for Treatment of HIV Infection, Dept of Health and Human Services, February 2001.

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**What is SUSTIVA?**

SUSTIVA is a medicine used to help treat HIV, the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). SUSTIVA is a type of HIV drug called a "non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor" (NNRTI).

**How does SUSTIVA work?**

SUSTIVA works by lowering the amount of HIV in the blood (called "viral load"). SUSTIVA must be taken with other anti-HIV medicines. When taken with other anti-HIV medicines, SUSTIVA has been shown to reduce viral load and increase the number of CD4 cells (a type of immune cell in blood). SUSTIVA may not have these effects in every patient.

**Does SUSTIVA cure HIV or AIDS?**

SUSTIVA is not a cure for HIV or AIDS. People taking SUSTIVA may still develop other infections associated with HIV. Because of this, it is very important that you remain under the care of your doctor.

**Does SUSTIVA reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?**

SUSTIVA has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others. Continue to practice safe sex, and do not use or share dirty needles.

**How should I take SUSTIVA?**

- The dose of SUSTIVA for adults is 600 mg (three 200 mg capsules, taken together) once a day by mouth. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower (see **Can children take SUSTIVA?**).
- Take SUSTIVA at the same time each day. You should take SUSTIVA at bedtime during the first few weeks or if you have side effects, such as dizziness or trouble concentrating (see **What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?**).
- Swallow SUSTIVA with water, juice, milk, or soda. You may take SUSTIVA with or without meals; however, SUSTIVA should not be taken with a high fat meal.
- Do not miss a dose of SUSTIVA. If you forget to take SUSTIVA, take the missed dose right away. If you do miss a dose, do not double the next dose. Carry on with your regular dosing schedule. If you need help in planning the best times to take your medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- Take the exact amount of SUSTIVA your doctor prescribes. Never change the dose on your own. Do not stop this medicine unless your doctor tells you to stop.
- When your SUSTIVA supply starts to run low, get more from your doctor or pharmacy. This is very important because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time. The virus may develop resistance to SUSTIVA and become harder to treat.

**Can children take SUSTIVA?**

Yes, children who are able to swallow capsules can take SUSTIVA. Rash may be a serious problem in some children. Tell your child's doctor right away if you notice rash or any other side effects while your child is taking SUSTIVA. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower than the dose for adults. Capsules containing lower doses of SUSTIVA are available. Your child's doctor will determine the right dose based on your child's weight.

**Who should not take SUSTIVA?**

Do not take SUSTIVA if you are allergic to SUSTIVA or any of its ingredients.

**What other medical problems or conditions should I discuss with my doctor?**

Talk to your doctor right away if you:

- Are pregnant or want to become pregnant
- Are breast-feeding
- Have problems with your liver, or have had Hepatitis
- Start or change any medicine
- Have side effects while taking SUSTIVA
- Have a history of mental illness, substance or alcohol abuse

**What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?**

A small number of patients have had severe depression, strange thoughts, or angry behavior. Some patients have had thoughts of suicide and a few patients have actually committed suicide. These problems tend to occur more often in patients with a history of mental illness. You should contact your doctor immediately if you think you are having these symptoms, so your doctor can decide whether you should continue to take SUSTIVA.

Many patients have dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating, and/or unusual dreams a few hours after starting treatment with SUSTIVA. These feelings may be less noticeable if you take SUSTIVA at bedtime. They also tend to go away after you've taken the medicine for a few weeks. If you have these side effects, such as dizziness, it does not mean that you will also have severe depression, strange

thoughts or angry behavior. Tell your doctor promptly if any of these side effects continue or if they bother you. There is the possibility that these symptoms may be more severe if SUSTIVA is used with alcohol or mood altering (street) drugs. You should avoid driving or operating machinery if you are having these side effects.

One of the most common side effects is rash. These rashes usually go away without any change in treatment. In a small number of patients, rash may be serious. If you develop a rash, call your doctor promptly.

Other common side effects include tiredness, upset stomach, vomiting, and diarrhea. However, this is not a complete list of side effects reported with SUSTIVA when taken with other anti-HIV drugs. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about side effects. Your doctor can discuss a more complete list of side effects with you.

Please contact your doctor immediately before stopping SUSTIVA because of side effects. Tell your doctor or other healthcare provider if you notice any side effects while taking SUSTIVA.

**What about birth control, pregnancy, or breast-feeding?**

Women should not become pregnant while taking SUSTIVA. Birth defects have been seen in animals treated with SUSTIVA. It is not known whether this could happen in humans. You should use a condom or diaphragm in addition to other methods of birth control while taking SUSTIVA. Inform your doctor immediately if you are pregnant. If you want to become pregnant, talk to your doctor. Do not take SUSTIVA if you are breast-feeding. Talk to your doctor if you are breast-feeding your baby.

**Can I take other medicines with SUSTIVA?**

SUSTIVA may change the effect of other medicines (including ones for HIV). Your doctor may change your medicines or change their doses. For this reason, it is very important to:

- Let all your doctors and pharmacists know that you take SUSTIVA.
- Tell your doctors and pharmacists about all medicines you take. This includes those you buy over-the-counter and herbal or natural remedies.

Bring all your medicines when you see a doctor, or make a list of their names, how much you take, and how often you take them. This will give your doctor a complete picture of the medicines you use. Then he or she can decide the best approach for your situation.

The following medicines may cause serious and life-threatening side effects when taken with SUSTIVA. You should not take any of these medicines while taking SUSTIVA\*\*:

- Hismanal® (astemizole)
- Propulsid® (cisapride)
- Versed® (midazolam)
- Halcion® (triazolam)
- Ergot medications (for example, Wigraine® and Cafergot®)

The following medicines may need to be changed or have their dose changed when taken with SUSTIVA\*\*:

- Crixivan® (indinavir)
- Fortovase® (saquinavir)
- Biaxin® (clarithromycin)

**How should I keep SUSTIVA?**

SUSTIVA is available as 50 mg, 100 mg, and 200 mg capsules.

Keep SUSTIVA at room temperature (77°F) in the bottle given to you by your pharmacist. The temperature can range from 59°-86°F.

Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children.

**How can I learn more about SUSTIVA?**

Talk to your doctor or other healthcare provider if you have questions about either SUSTIVA or HIV. For additional information you can visit the SUSTIVA website at <http://www.sustiva.com>.

**This medicine was prescribed for your particular condition. Do not use it for any other condition or give it to anybody else. Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children. If you suspect that more than the prescribed dose of this medicine has been taken, contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately.**

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

## Center hosts toga party next Fri.

by David Fraser

What's inside that toga? The LGBT Community Center Project is hoping the answer is (mostly) plenty of funds as it issues an invitation to "The Bacchanal" toga party next Friday, March 16.

Billed as an evening of "feasting, wine, spirits, and great entertainment," the party will be held at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Forum, 701 Mission Street in San Francisco from 7 to 11 p.m. Tickets are \$125.

The togafest is aimed at raising funds for the San Francisco LGBT Community Center being constructed at the corner of Market and Octavia streets.

"The Bacchanal is really the big kick-off to complete the project,"

said Mike Marshall, interim executive director. "We've received so much support from the city and the community already, but we still have more money to raise so that we can open the doors as planned. This event is designed to be a wickedly fun celebration of what is to come, as well as to bring in as much cold, hard cash as possible."

The evening features a silent auction of more than \$50,000 in items donated by local businesses, including gift certificates, hotel stays, and other goodies. Proceeds will go to the center's capital campaign.

Attendance is expected to top 400, and tickets are still available.

Entertainment includes Mixtress Page Hodel and a performance by the Tribal Eyes Belly Dancers.

Togas are the suggested attire. Anyone can be named a god or goddess for the evening with a ticket purchase of \$300. Attendees who donate at least \$1,000 will also be designated a founder at the center, and their names will appear on a plaque in the lobby of the new building.

Sponsors include *Curve* and *QSF* magazines, as well as Pacific Bell, which has agreed to match up to \$60,000 in contributions from the evening in addition to a previous \$40,000 contribution. AT&T has donated \$50,000 toward The Bacchanal, and libations are being donated by Beaulieu Vineyards, Graham's Port, and Seagram Americas. ▼

For tickets, call Poulos Brothers at (415) 864-8523.

## Bayer protest

◀ page 1

are not unreasonable people. We understand that research and development is underwritten by drug prices, and we acknowledge Bayer's positive role in the community. But we must stand with South Africa on this crucial issue. We can no longer accept profits being put before people." [See story on the trial on page 23.]

According to Berkeley City Council member Kriss Worthington, "Bayer could easily withdraw from this lawsuit and still stay in business ... doing so will not break their coffers." South Africa accounts for only about 1 percent of worldwide pharmaceutical sales.

The action, which counted among its endorsers a wide range of organizations—from the California Nurses Association and the Buddhist Peace Fellowship to Doctors Without Borders and the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission—was one of the most diverse AIDS actions ever seen in the Bay Area. Groups such as Global Exchange were on hand to link the issue of affordable drugs to the larger struggle against corporate globalization, while the Gray Panthers made the connection with their fight for drug access in the U.S. According to the Gray Panthers' Margo Smith, "We support everyone having good, universal, high quality medical care."

Several speakers noted the irony that the South African peo-



Berkeley Vice Mayor Maudelle Shirek is led away by Police Capt. Bobby Miller.

ple liberated themselves from the racist apartheid regime in 1994, only to face the AIDS epidemic and a new form of "medical apartheid." According to Medea Benjamin of Global Exchange, "The policy of keeping drugs from dying people can be summed up in one word: genocide."

"It's not that these drugs don't exist," said Rebecca Dennison of Women Responding to Life-Threatening Diseases. "The only thing preventing parents from living to see their children grow up is money."

Around the world, activists came out to protest the lack of affordable AIDS treatment. In Pretoria, where the South African lawsuit is being heard, thousands participated in demonstrations at the High Court and at the U.S. Embassy; Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops were among the protesters. Last Friday, several hun-

dred people protested in Copenhagen at the headquarters of Novo Nordisk, another party in the suit. In Brazil, activists on Monday kicked off a campaign to raise awareness about U.S. attempts to have the World Trade Organization overturn a Brazilian law that allows the local manufacture of generic drugs. The Progressive Organization of Gays in the Philippines (Progay) led a picket at the Department of Health in Manila. According to Progay secretary Oscar Atadero, "The Philippines and other Third World countries must strive to set up major manufacturing infrastructure for their own medicines and not let the demand for cruel profits hold the health of 6 billion people hostage."

A major Washington, D.C. demonstration planned by ACT UP/Philadelphia was postponed until this Monday, March 12, due to a snow storm on the East Coast. However, intrepid activists braved the snow to picket GlaxoSmith-Kline's U.S. headquarters in Philadelphia, and the Glaxo and Bristol-Myers Squibb offices in New York City. ▼

On March 29, ACT UP/East Bay and Global Exchange will sponsor a teach-in to discuss the issue of drug patents and treatment access. The event will be held at the Java House, 3306 Lakeshore Avenue in Oakland. For information call (415) 255-0796 or send e-mail to marla@globalexchange.org.

called the banner "monstrous," but said he still appreciated the project to construct the center.

Board members decided on the wording after much deliberation, Marshall said. "In many ways, this really is the gayest place in America. We are beginning to think of it as a place where people talk to each other."

Irrespective of the banner's role, the center has clearly garnered a hefty dose of support, raising around \$12.3 million so far of a \$15.3 million target.

"That target should get us up and running for at least six months," Marshall said, adding that the annual operating budget once the center opens would probably be in the neighborhood of \$2 million.

Marshall acknowledged the variety of reactions to the banner's wording in a letter to the *Bay Area Reporter* last week.

"We know that it provokes very strong responses in some people," Marshall wrote. "For the Stonewall generation, it's a reminder of a not-so-distant past

when the word was used to hurt, to marginalize, to persecute. For younger generations it is a word that empowers them to take control of the hatred and discrimination that has been directed at all of us for too long."

Brian Cheu, executive director of the queer youth organization LYRIC, said the term serves many purposes, including self-identification for many, as well as general convenience.

"We've used the word 'queer' often in different ways, for example as a shorthand—it's a lot easier than saying 'lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning' and so forth," Cheu said. Especially among youth movements and within queer activism, he added, people tend to "become much more comfortable; they're reclaiming the term."

Moreover, he said, it is often used as a catchall to cover a range of alternative sexualities ranging from conventional, now widely-accepted terms such as lesbian and gay, to developing concepts such

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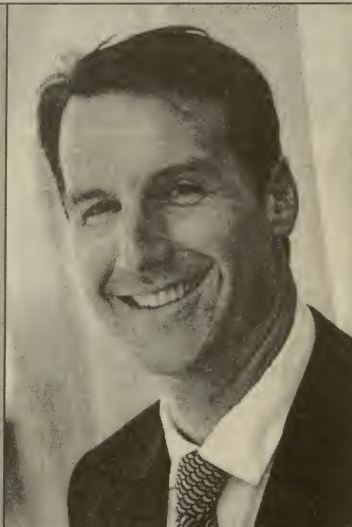
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## Center

◀ page 1


school ...

"The courage of the older generations did bring forth the advances we know today, as [Marshall] so aptly pointed out. I believe we should respect those who marched before us and leave the word 'queer' in the past—where it belongs. And in naming the center, I hope and pray the word 'queer' is not planned to be a part of it. I find it offensive and hurtful."

"When I saw the 'Queerest Place in America' poster I was absolutely thrilled and very proud. Not only is the word queer so clearly unifying for all persons included in lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender, but it reclaims a word used to vilify. ... I am 49 years old ... I strongly endorse the idea of celebrating our differences from the mainstream and I feel the word queer does this perfectly."

Marshall said an 80-year-old World War II veteran phoned and

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## Hats off to Sophie



New San Francisco District 10 Supervisor Sophie Maxwell, left, greets city Treasurer Susan Leal at a benefit Sunday, March 4 at the Potrero Hill Neighborhood House. Many local politicians were on hand to celebrate Maxwell's victory last December and to help her retire her campaign debt.



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## Housing

◀ page 1

people understand that this legislation is not Proposition N," agreed Robert Haaland, a queer activist and director of organizing for the Housing Rights Committee. "In fact it contains some huge giveaways that TIC owners cannot presently enjoy under current law. I personally don't think the legislation goes far enough."

### TIC infestation

There weren't always so many TICs, largely because they are not a great way to own property, some say. In a TIC, a person's unit counts as a fraction of an entire dwelling, which means if the next door neighbors fail on their mortgage, everyone in the building is in jeopardy.

Condominiums, by contrast, are their own separate units. Unlike TICs, a condo owner owns 100 percent of one unit rather than a smaller percentage of an entire building. That is why many TIC owners eventually try to convert their units into condominiums.

In 1979, San Francisco passed the condominium conversion law, which protected seniors and other vulnerable tenants from the get-rich-quick real estate practices that often result in evictions. The law does not outlaw converting apartments into condominiums but rather calls for an annual limit on such conversions, to be determined by lottery. With such a law, evictions are curbed, because developers cannot rely on a quick turnaround of an empty building. Opponents of the law have argued that the limits prevent tenants from buying their unit when the building goes up for sale, but those same opponents neglected to mention that such units are unaffordable for most tenants, who must engage in bidding wars with the general public to secure their space.

Thankfully for real estate moguls, TICs did not fall under the condo conversion law, and they knew a good thing when they saw it.

"The reason TICs became so popular in the 1990s is that they were a way to bypass the condo conversion law, bypass tenant protections, and make a lot of money," said Haaland. "As it stands, a real estate speculator can buy a building, evict its tenants, and make half a million dollars in a matter of days."

If TICs fell under condo regulation, these buyers would have to wait and see whether they were approved for conversion, which means there would be very little incentive to immediately evict tenants.

But what about those units that in fact are approved for TIC conversion? In the current climate, the "bad for gays" camp argues that tenants will have fewer opportunities to buy a home if TICs are regulated. Actually, they will have a better chance of owning their apartment should it come up for sale under Daly's legislation, which guarantees them first crack at the purchase without engaging in the bidding wars that are so common today.

### Good for gays

For all the talk from gay people who presently own TICs, one might think Daly's compromise legislation was a right-wing sucker punch designed to make gays a community of lifelong renters. In fact, say queers who support the legislation, TIC owners may not realize that the proposed law will make it easier for LGBT people to own homes and stay in San Francisco.

For starters, Daly's legislation immediately grants condominium status to TIC owners hoping to convert their properties. There are presently about 2,000 TIC owners waiting for 200 available condo conversions, and rather than going through current re-

strictions they would instead gain instant access to their dream.

Additionally, Daly's legislation specifically includes domestic partners as family members, nullifying the argument that regulation would leave no way for LGBT couples to jointly own property.

Finally, unlike Proposition N, Daly's legislation will not affect two-unit buildings, leaving an entire class of structures without regulation.

Considering all the facts, said Haaland, the phrase "bad for gays" is actually quite insulting.

"Real estate speculators are disingenuously arguing that this legislation is bad for gays. The premise of their argument is that it bans TICs, which it doesn't. People can continue to hold property as TICs and continue to form TICs under the condo conversion limit," said Haaland, noting that currently about 1,000 evictions per year can be attributed to TIC conversions. "Buying a home in San Francisco is out of reach for 90 percent of our gay brothers and sisters. They're being evicted and leaving the city in record numbers, never to return. Our community is being decimated. So the question is do you let this go totally unregulated at the expense of our community or do you enact some protections? This legislation is not bad for gays, it's bad for gay real estate speculators."

Daly agreed.

"The group of people with the most to lose from the compromise legislation are the real estate industry folks who have financed a very smooth campaign that claims TIC regulation is 'bad for gays,' and that TICs are the only 'affordable' housing in San Francisco," said Daly, who noted that the average TIC runs about \$400,000. "These real estate folks — who may or may not be gay — are concerned about certain communities only to the extent that it affects their profit margins." ▼

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# An old-fashioned demo

by Jeff Getty and Michael Botkin's Ghost, Survive AIDS Writers Pool

**R**ick Solomon laughed when Berkeley Vice Mayor Maudelle Shirek refused to sit down on the cold wet ground inside the Bayer compound gate. "She didn't want to get dirty, I think, so she just walked up to the cops asked them to arrest her," he said.

Such was the scene Monday at a noon demonstration outside the Bayer Corporation's labs in Berkeley. Thirty-nine demonstrators were arrested protesting the 39 drug companies and Pharma organizations that sued the government of South Africa on Monday, for daring to produce its own AIDS drugs. Bayer was one of the companies who joined the suit. Solomon seemed to enjoy the demonstration. "The police were very polite, but no handcuffs. We were cited and released," he said. Solomon noticed that the police were wearing black rubber gloves that did not seem to match the rest of their ensemble. "I was disappointed that I didn't get to ride in the police truck," he mentioned.

The arrested protesters were cheerfully and efficiently charged with criminal trespass. As of Tuesday, Bayer had not dropped the charges.

**ACT UP**/East Bay's John Iversen said that Bayer really felt pressured by the demonstration and had tried to derail the action. "They even put out a bogus press release announcing the action, but

at the wrong time," he said. Bayer also called activists and Shirek by phone asking them to call off the demonstration. "Clearly Bayer did not want the bad PR associated with being a part of a lawsuit that could ultimately let millions of people die," said Iversen.

So why did 200 people show up on a rainy day, and why did 39 people choose to be arrested? Such action and demonstration is a rare thing to see these days. Most PWAs have returned to work or retired to the south somewhere to grow orchids and raise poodles. Large demonstrations were a



**Survive AIDS**

sions to withhold these drugs, keep them overpriced, and challenge cheap generic drugs," remarked Solomon when asked why he chose to be arrested.

I found myself asking, how do these Pharma and drug company employees sleep at night, knowing that winning their lawsuit could kill millions? Then the answer came to me. Of course! They just take their own pills. One needs little or no conscience when one has Prozac to cope and Ambien to sleep. And through reckless and relentless marketing, they shove their chemical reality down all our throats as well. Take your

**"These companies are committing willful genocide, these are conscious decisions to withhold these drugs, keep them overpriced."**

thing of the past. AIDS is not as important as it used to be. But the very idea that drug companies would go so far as to file lawsuits to stop people from producing their own drugs in order to survive has really struck a chord among PWAs and global activists alike.

"The situation really is that these companies are committing willful genocide, these are conscious deci-

happy pills folks, no need to demonstrate. Stay home, rent a movie. We're all safe aren't we?

So are we going to stand by and watch 30 million people die in the name of "intellectual property rights?" Stay tuned. Iversen and others are planning more fun and games for our friends in the pharmaceutical industry in the coming weeks. GlaxoSmithKline will get a strong "unwelcome" at its planned

## List of drug companies

Here's the list of drug companies who are going after South Africa:

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Knoll Pharmaceuticals South Africa (Proprietary) Limited  
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Merck (Proprietary) Limited  
Msd (Proprietary) Limited  
Novartis South Africa (Proprietary) Limited  
Novo Nordisk (Proprietary) Limited  
Pharmacia & Upjohn (Proprietary) Limited  
Rhône-Poulenc Rorer South Africa (Proprietary) Limited  
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AIDS Update conference cocktail party at the S.F. War Memorial on March 21. There also will be a global AIDS teach-in at the Java

House Café at 3306 Lakeshore Avenue in Oakland, on March 29. Contact John Iversen to get involved, (510) 568-1680. ▼

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- Viral load of at least 2000 copies/mL

This study lasts 48 weeks. All lab work, physical examinations and study medications will be provided free of charge. BMS232632 may have a unique resistance profile.

### \***FTC-301** Once-Daily NRTI

A Phase III Study Comparing FTC to D4T in a Triple Drug Combination Therapy

#### *Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria include:*

- No prior antiretroviral therapy
- CD4 cell count at least 150 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>
- Viral load at least 5,000 copies/mL

FTC is a once-daily NRTI, similar to 3TC. This study will last 48 weeks. All lab work, physical examinations and study medications will be provided free of charge.

### \***IL-2** SILCAAT Study: T-Cell Growth

A Phase III Study of the Effects of IL-2 on CD4 Cell Counts

#### *Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria include:*

- CD4 cell count **under** 300 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>
- Viral load less than 10,000 copies/mL
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## Fit fete

by Grace Period

Well, sweeties, if you missed the sports event of la communauté, you are hereby scolded to make sure to attend the next! Cheer SF, jocks galore, and fine food and drink were in abundance March 1 at Harvey's.

One of our unattendees was your regular sports columnist, Ms. Provenzano, who, after an interview with a renowned lesbian boxer in the stately city of Oakland, apparently found himself engaged in the company of a young Latino pugilist who'd make Bruce Weber drool. Mr. Sports Complex promises to return next week, if he can ever remove himself from the gloved arms of his new beau.

Our sporty scribbler simply begged me to cover this event, although there was no open bar (shocking!), and I put on my best Louis Vuitton sports togs to attend the Team San Francisco Gay Games 2002 pre-registration kick-off.

Although sprinkling rains threatened to hamper attendance, and spoil my wrap, Harvey's was packed with affable sporty folk eager to auction or be auctioned.

Dr. Kathleen McGuire, the artistic director of the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, offered some tips for future travelers down under. Ms. McGuire is herself Australian-born.

"Australians swear a lot," she warned, saying that it's never (or rarely) an offense, just part of the affably relaxed Oz culture. "Everything's bloody, but it's not real blood."

"And don't call it a fanny pack, but a bum pack," she warned. "Fannies are a part of the female anatomy." There were also references to Sheila, toads, and roads, but I became distracted by a certain attractive member of the wait staff.

Ms. McGuire then conducted songs sung by dozens of members of the Gay Men's Chorus, a rendition of "San Francisco" and our national anthem. I overheard one attendee claim the song was composed by a lesbian.

"Francis Scott Key was a lesbian?" his friend queried.

"Oh. I was thinking, 'America, the Beautiful,'" his confused friend replied.

Surrounded by crooning choir boys, a quartet of lesbians finishing dinner seemed to be about to attend a wedding, as one gal donned a fetching bridal gown while her belle lovingly adjusted her tiara. It wasn't a nuptial they were attending, but the faboo *Sing-A-Long Sound of Music* across the street at the Castro Theatre.

One lucky attendee was the first to buy one of the items auctioned off to benefit Team SF's scholarship fund; two tickets to the *Sound of Music*. Although he wasn't dressed as a nun, von Trapp or SS bad guy, he seemed ready to hop across the glistening avenue for a night of interactive theatrics. His donation of \$125 got things rolling.

Others stayed to enjoy the theatrics of Team SF board co-chair Leslie Adams, who hosted a few more auctions, including dinner for two at John Frank and coupons to the Sports Basement,



Bob Hancock, left, casts a winning smile while Leslie Adams, chair of Team SF, auctions him off for a dinner date during the registration kick-off for Gay Games 2002 in Sydney.

a terrific spot for all your sports gear needs. I'm not sure if they sell Gauthier or Kenneth Cole, but I guess when one is sweating, fashion takes a step back.

And as her assistant took a step back, "Don't try to upstage a lesbian," Ms. Adams warned. And how could one, with her eclectic ensemble of multi-colored Aussie fatigue vest (a souvenir of Gay Games V, we were told), zip-up-the-side sweats and "Dorothy shoes." Pret-a-porter, indeed. We were thinking of another Oz character.

A Mr. Dodson, formerly of the theatrical world, was the high bidder for a John Frank Restaurant dinner for two with his beau, a Mr. Almon, of Golden Gate Wrestling Club.

The two handsome grapplers informed me that they and their team will be hosting a festive sporty demonstration and serving lots of tasty Italian food on Sunday, March 11 at the SF Eagle tavern. This annual beer benefit party helps raise funds to get those mat men off to Gay Games. Time to polish up my Versace chaps!

Another \$125 was donated in exchange for dinner for two at 2223 Market, aka the No-Name restaurant, which provides all the noise and attitude of Manhattan, without having to travel cross country.

Team SF treasurer Glenn Galang milled about the bar taking auction bids, and those restaurant coupons went fast! Mr. Galang is a co-founder of SF Unity Triathletes. Perhaps he'll do the Alcatraz Triathlon someday!

Frankly, I miss the Boston Market that used to reside where John Frank's swank boite now offers \$12 salads and free parking, but, "Chock a song goo," as the French say. And how simply marvellous of them to donate a dining experience.

A vintage souvenir Gay Games II poster went for a fetching \$125 faster than you can be outbid on E-bay. Its notable historic graphic included the word "Olympic," which the stuffy Olympic committee, gay sport historians well know, was banned from overtly homo usage, while Rat Olympics seem to bother nary an IOC member.

Other fashion tips were offered by Team SF's Jim Oakley, also a basketball and FrontRunners athlete. Mr. Oakley showed off the latest T-shirts, including Team SF's "Training for Sydney" shirts (a mere \$10) and Sydney 2002 shirts (a less mere \$15).

Mr. Oakley noted that funds will aid the scholarship fund, and folks who order airfare and accommodations through Team SF will help make the group rates such a bargain that they'll be able

to squeeze those scholarship jocks on the plane, too. Qantas, I'm told, is the official airline of Gay Games.

Unfortunately, the official Web site of Gay Games (the name escapes me) hasn't provided the on-line help it should, and despite it being a pre-registration party, attendees were advised not to pre-register, since online forms still have a few cucurache-sized bugs.

Oh dear, with large-scale economic problems also occurring down under, let's hope it all doesn't turn into another Dutch treat ala '98.

In addition to being the biggest quadrennial sports event on the planet, Gay Games will also include a tres gay cultural festival. Be sure to vote absentee ballot in '02, for the events take place around election time, October 24-November 9.

But the most festive part of the evening was the modeling of the new Team SF uniforms, and the auctioning of the model's company!

Fashion is my cup of mocha java, and I must say the new uniforms are quite smashing! The new logo - which incorporates that ever so gaily iconic TransAmerica Building - shows proudly on the chest area. The colors, bold blue and yellow, while reminiscent of Cub Scouts, are offset by sharp angular patterns set against white. Blue pants and shorts accompany the uniform, and model Bob Hancock teasingly disrobed, causing quite a stir among the more available of men.

But what caused more of a stir was Mr. Hancock's volunteering to be auctioned off as a dinner date! Cash flew fast as Reno slots as a Mr. David Wabel of San Francisco snapped up the "silver-haired, blue-eyed hunk" de soire for a whopping \$210.

"Is he single?" someone asked of Mr. Hancock.

"Not for long," hooted comedian and ex-monk Christopher Hennelly, in town from New York to visit friends. Mr. Hennelly and I attended church together oh so many years ago.

As the Gay Games promotional video played on the TV screens, signaling the end of the festivities, I and my companions dashed through the drizzle to the Midnight Sun. We caught the rerun of *Will & Grace* with that ever so sassy Patrick Dempsey, who plays a gay sportscaster. Imagine that!

For more info, visit <http://www.teamsf.org>, <http://www.gaygames.com>, or call (415) 522-2386.

For info on the Golden Gate Wrestling beer benefit at the SF Eagle, visit <http://www.ggwc.org>.

**Ms. Provenzano shall return next week. In the meantime, visit <http://sportscomplex.org>.**



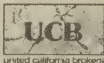
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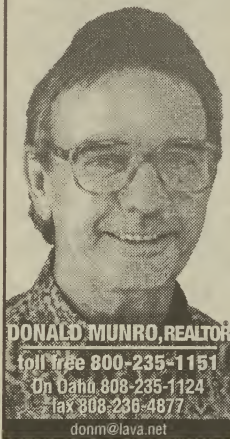
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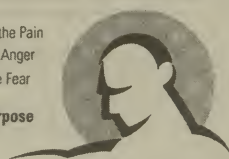
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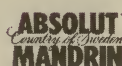
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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

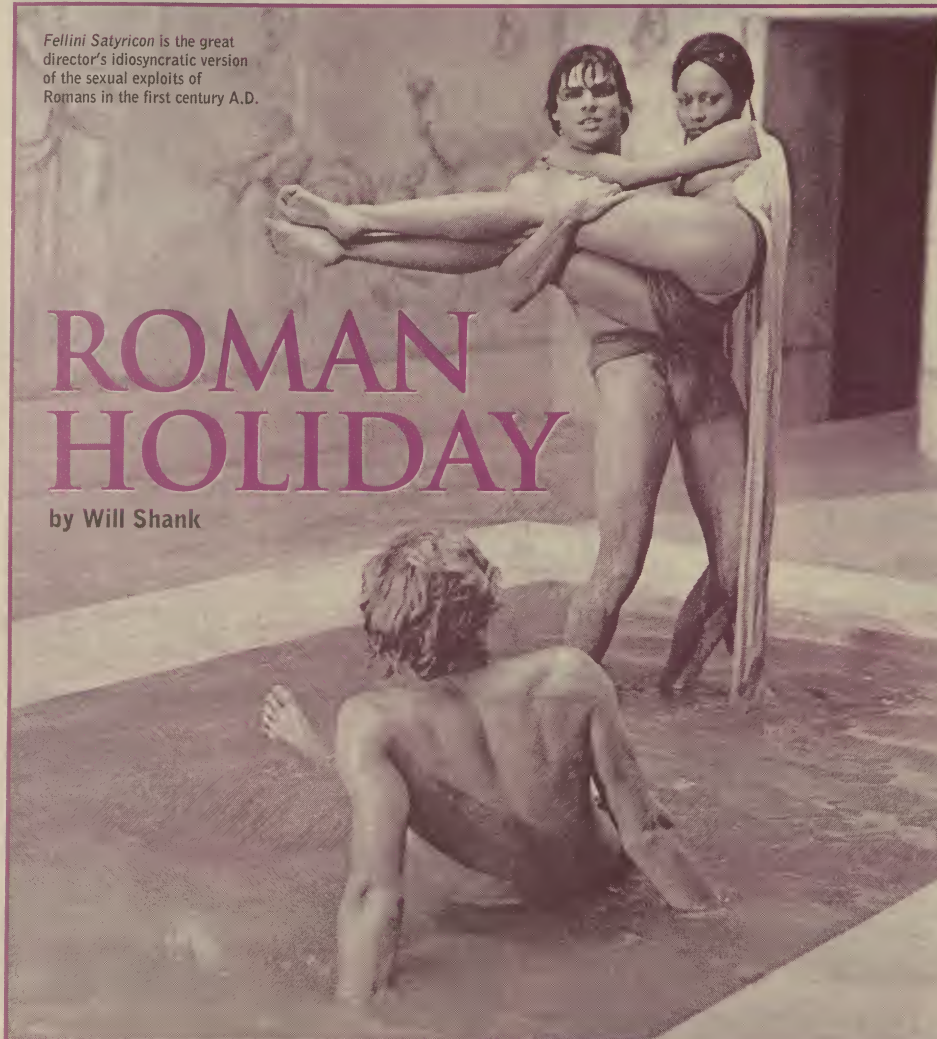
BAY AREA REPORTER

Vol. 31 • No. 10 • 8 March 2001

Fellini *Satyricon* is the great  
director's idiosyncratic version  
of the sexual exploits of  
Romans in the first century A.D.

## ROMAN HOLIDAY

by Will Shank



## 'FELLINI SATYRICON' LETS LOOSE AT THE CASTRO

Roman troops cross the bleak countryside of the farthest reaches of the Ancient Empire! A helpless civilian finds himself in the middle of a gladiatorial arena! Noble patricians are morally compromised by the unprincipled, lawless environment in which they live! Lots of beefy guys strut around in togas! But if you're expecting another *Gladiator*, look elsewhere than the weeklong revival of *Fellini Satyricon* at the Castro Theatre.

Never before nor since has there been a film like this one. Federico Fellini's surreal opus could be seen as the definition of the adjective "Felliniesque." After spending the previous decade pushing the envelope with meandering screenplays that toyed with scandalous themes revolving around contemporary Italian morals (*La Dolce Vita*, 8 1/2), the director let it all loose in *Fellini Satyricon*. The double name is less a vanity plate than the director's desire to separate his work from a previous cinematic rendition of the fragmented novel of Roman writer Petronius, which was called simply *Satyricon*.

It was a scandal at the time of its release more than 30 years ago, and it is certainly not to everyone's taste, but when Fellini took chances, he took them big! His version of the ribald sexual exploits of Romans in the first century A.D. remains one of the most individualistic signature pieces of one of the most easily identifiable cinema auteurs of all time. The director has

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United Artists Corporation

## FAMILY TIES, NEW WORLD DELIGHTS

### 19TH ASIAN-AMERICAN FILM FEST OPENS

by Gary Morris

The Bay Area's diversity and large, responsive audiences have put the San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival on the festival fast-track. Now in its 19th year, the SFIAAFF has become an increasingly plush and rather important venue for showcasing recent cinema from countries as disparate as Japan, Korea, India, the Philippines, China, and Hong Kong, and the Asian Diaspora scattered throughout the US, Canada, Australia, and elsewhere. This is the largest such event in North America.

This year's fest, based on a sampling of a dozen or so features, docs, and shorts compilations, runs the gamut from the tired to the transcendent, stopping at all points in-between. Some of the higher-profile entries are surprisingly disappointing, but there are

plenty of gems hidden in the less-heralded films (3/8-15 at Kabuki 8, Pacific Film Archive).

Opening night's *The Flip Side*, a US/Philippine production directed by Rod Pulido, mines familiar territory in a too-familiar way to be very effective. Hunky Darius Delacruz (Verwin Gatchup) returns from college obsessed with reintroducing his family to traditional Filipino culture — no easy task with a sister who's an Americanized mallrat, a brother who copies the local gangstas, and parents who are caught between the Old World and the New. Director Pulido writes some good laughs, and there are a few arresting images — some viewers will appreciate Gatchup's red-hot "Filipino jockstrap" scenes — but there's little that's new here.

A more interesting film, also centering on Filipino-Americans, closes the fest. Gene Cajayon's *The Debut* is in some ways akin to an old Hollywood

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Darion Basco and Derek Basco in *The Debut*



SECOND OF TWO SECTIONS

by Roberto Friedman  
and Ima Mailbag

Los Angeles-based actress and Jack "The Pledge" Nicholson's current girlfriend Lara Flynn Boyle was asked in her recent *Vanity Fair* full-treatment, "What makes a good party?"



Lara Flynn Boyle in *Vanity Fair*

"Drag queens and a dress code," she said, summing up Hollywood café society in a tidy five words. In Boyle's big photo layout, she looks like a drag queen with a rather lax dress code, but with some very real boobs. She's Miss Hollywood. Her own acting career peaked with *Twin Peaks*.

This month's *VF* has a hard task topping last month's, which also showed *Madrileño* filmmaker Pedro Almodóvar balancing a kitchen chair on one of his chins, illustrating a gushy profile written by the usually sober-sided Colm Tóibín. The issue goes straight into our "To Save" file, of course, but mostly because of the presence of lanky beauty Keanu Reeves on the cover. He got the cover despite not being Jack Nicholson's girlfriend — or David Geffen's boyfriend.

The article, "Keanu, from Both Sides Now," shows that Reeves does indeed give good photo op, with our boy full-page and full-color in both full-frontal and full-backal Versace. After that generous display of his lean manhood, who cares what he had to say?



Keanu Reeves in *Vanity Fair*

But in fact keen K. had a few surprises up his designer sleeves. Sniffs *V Fair*: "The actor says he has no vices, even though he smokes and admits to having taken drugs. I just don't relate to them as vices," he says."

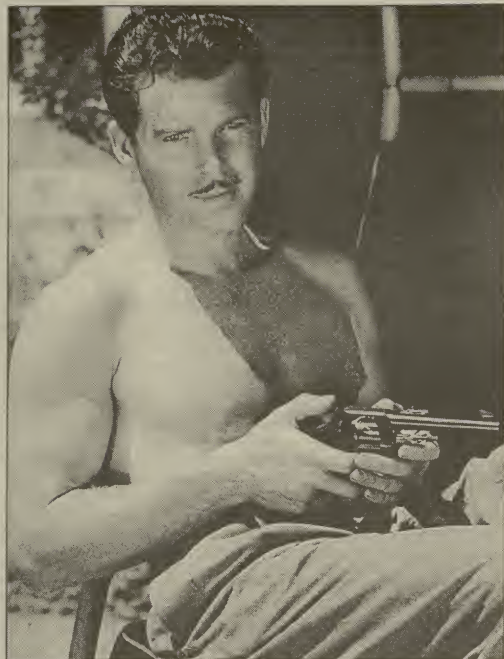
### Community chest

It's nice to meet a book as completely enamored with and dedicated to the allure of the bare male chest as is *Shirtless*, a Universe release by Donald F. Reuter. There are only two things on *Shirtless'* mind, and both of them are non-lactating mammary glands.

Subtitled *The Hollywood Male Physique*, the book tracks exposed male breasts from the likes of Ramon Navarro (inexcusably spelled Navarro in print), through dapper Errol Flynn, to the young Fred MacMurray (who knew the daddy from *My Three Sons* was once possessed of such pulchritude?) and so on. Our panel of lecherous judges has deemed the fleshy busts of the following film stars to be of sufficient public interest: Robert (G.I. Joe) Mitchum, Marlon (Named Desire) Brando, Paul (Bird of Youth) Newman and Matt (Drugstore Cowboy) Dillon.

Then there are the boyish physiques of teen-boppers like Jan-Michael Vincent, Jimmy McNichol and Scott Baio. Where are these towering talents now? And have their figures fallen?

Our only quibble with the *Shirtless* agenda is with its overkill



Fred MacMurray, in the book *Shirtless: The Hollywood Male Physique*

promotional onslaught: Universe stuffed the mailbags of Out There and other opinion-makers nationwide with slinky T-shirts emblazoned with the book's name, thus somewhat defeating the purpose of the book's crusade to de-shirt American men.

### Fever dreams

We're listening now to veteran blues singer John

Hammond do a mess of Tom Waits songs on *Wicked Grin*, a new Virgin release produced by Waits. Hammond really does the songs justice; Waits sings along on some tracks and plays guitar.



Singer Tom Waits

stories for that uncomprehending crowd about his experiences in Puerto Rico, about being a hairdresser, about his dreams of Hollywood stardom. Lighting up a cigarette, Rock then performed a *cappella* version of Ben E. King's R&B lament "I (Who Have Nothing)." The suits didn't get it at all, but Waits did. He knew he had to get into show business as fast as he could. There's always some talented queen behind every bad influence.



Playwright Charles Busch

### President Busch

The *Tale of the Allergist's Wife* and other plays, a collection of plays by fab gay playwright/author Charles Busch, is newly out in paperback from Grove Press. In addition to the title play, a hit of the current New York theatre season (see this week's *Backstage* column), the book includes scripts from such camp landmarks as *Psycho Beach Party*, *The Lady in Question* and *Vampire Lesbians of Sodom*.

In the first scene from *VLs of Sodom*, an unfortunate young virgin is sacrificed to an evil vampire lesbian who has taken the form of an invading spirit, or succubus. Said virgin tries to fake her way out of the jam.

"Girl: What proof of you of my maidenhead? What if I told you I was the village slut, a repository for every man's seed in Sodom?"

"Succubus: I'd say you were a big fat liar. Now get in that cave. I'm freezing my ass off in this draft. ... What keeps me going is a sense of humor. I giggle, I chuckle, I even guffaw, but inside I weep. It's the age-old story — laugh, Succubus, laugh." ▼

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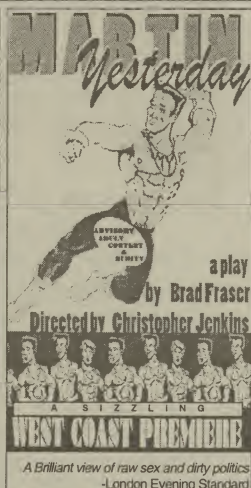
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## THEATRE

# Back to the bunker

## 'Don't Make Me Say Things' at Rhino

by Richard Dodds

**D**oug Holsclaw's *Don't Make Me Say Things That Will Hurt You* runs barely 60 minutes, but they are a cramp-packed 60 minutes. In this one-man show at Theatre Rhinoceros, Holsclaw plays a man whose solitary life is fueled by fantasies, and if they are as fussy as the fuchsia time-capsule in which he lives, there are no wasted words in this fascinating creation.

Holsclaw, now the artistic director of Theatre Rhino, first performed *Don't Make Me Say Things* 10 years ago at Josie's Cabaret, and its success led to two more solo shows featuring the flamboyantly

recalcitrant Pete Hilton.

Like a 1950s survivalist who has sealed himself off in a backyard bomb shelter awaiting a nuclear holocaust, Hilton has sequestered himself in the face of an unnamed threat that is obviously AIDS. He wonders aloud if he might not be the last living faggot on Earth. Living on pizza deliveries, he communicates only to the hosts of home shopping networks.

But this implied threat may also be an excuse for a worldly withdrawal born of romantic disappointment and spiritual fatigue. The real world, it seems, just doesn't live up to what Pete Hilton needs for survival.

And so he stages make-believe soires in which he dresses up his favorite dildos as the puppet-like

guests, he imagines himself an interview subject on a Barbara Walters special, and he dons a succession of outfits as he portrays everyone from a sex kitten to the aged Greta Garbo.

The show is loaded with laughs, but you don't have to dig far to find the serious veins. Ten years after its debut, *Don't Make Me Say Things That Will Hurt You* remains an entertaining and slightly disturbing portrait of a queen unable to cope. ▼

**Don't Make Me Say Things That Will Hurt You** will run at Theatre Rhino through March 24. Tickets are \$16. Call 861-5079.



Doug Holsclaw in *Don't Make Me Say Things That Will Hurt You*

# From deepest Canada

## Brad Fraser's 'Martin Yesterday' at NCTC

by Richard Dodds

**W**hat an odd and quirky play is *Martin Yesterday*. Playwright Brad Fraser creates a world of high specificity in locale, characters, and situations, but one that is still hard to grasp. Despite the literal and figurative roller coaster that the characters ride, the audience's journey remains surprisingly tame.

Not that Fraser doesn't offer up hefty doses of nudity, intense simulated (and sometimes creepy) sex, and provocative situations. Even for the New Conservatory Theatre Center, which has never been shy about full-frontal diversifications, *Martin Yesterday* is graphic stuff.

Fraser has a substantial reputation in his native Canada as a theatrical provocateur, and his earlier plays like *Poor Super Man* and *Unidentified Human Remains and the Nature of True Love* have been widely produced. But *Martin Yesterday* was lambasted in its original Toronto production, leading Fraser to make substantial changes for the play's handful of

subsequent productions.

The play indeed has merit, as it examines a gay culture in which relationships can be twisted into ugly shapes by straight prejudices, gay self-loathing, and the consequences of two decades spent under the cloud of the Plague. Easy answers are avoided in *Martin Yesterday*, even if the questions only occasionally hit their marks.

In addition to the bouts of titillation, Fraser also leavens his dark message with humor. "Love handles have become the leprosy of the '90s," says one of the body-conscious gay characters. The setting is Toronto, and a fair number of Canadian jokes are stirred into the pot.

Fraser's title character is a Toronto city councilman who is openly gay and who seems to be fighting the good fight. He begins a relationship with the considerably younger Matt, a creator of hip comic books with characters like Spam Man and Fridge Magnet Girl. As Matt gradually learns, Martin's personal life is as messy as his public persona is pristine.

Even so, Martin seems to want

to do the right thing, telling Matt that he is HIV-positive at the start of their relationship while trying to rid himself of the urge to play rapist-daddy with barely-legal rough trade. As for Matt, his involvement with Martin causes strains in his relationship with his comic-book partner, a hip straight woman who still can't quite fath-

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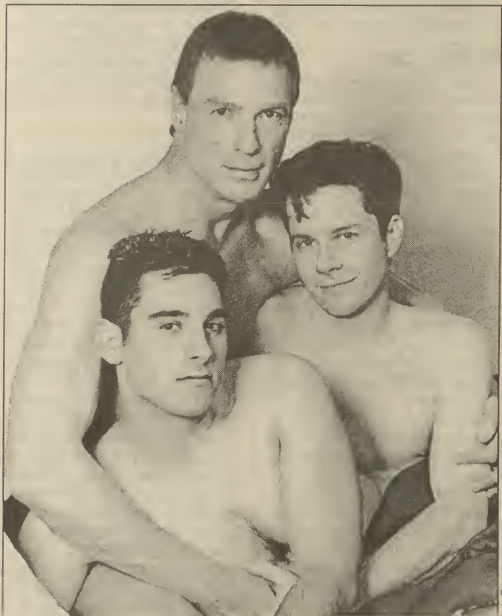
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Clockwise from top, Lee Corbett, Scott Cox, and Derek Cowan

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# Our regards to Broadway

## Linda Lavin shines in Charles Busch play

by Richard Dodds

A quick trip to New York for some theater critics' business meant time for four Broadway shows. It also meant making one choice that proved less than, well, choice.

But first the good news. Gay superstar Charles Busch is now giving Neil Simon a run for his money. Actually, his comedy *The Tale of the Allergist's Wife* is far funnier than anything Simon has written in years, and while it's a mainstream hit, it has a knowingly wacky edge that you'd expect from the author and star of *Vampire Lesbians of Sodom*, *The Lady in Question*, and *Psycho Beach Party*.

But rather than creating a cross-dressing starring role for himself, Busch has built a comedy around the talents of Linda Lavin. It's a magnificent role and a magnificent performance. I couldn't stand Lavin on TV's *Alice*, and I had grudging respect for her in Neil Simon's *Broadway Bound*, but this is a performance too comically inspired to resist.

A most unglamorous Lavin



Linda Lavin in *The Tale of the Allergist's Wife*

plays the very depressed wife of a do-good doctor whose mission is to treat allergies in the homeless. While her husband (Tony Roberts) wins awards for his philanthropy and her cranky mother (the delightfully irascible Shirl Bernheim) complains about her bowel movements, Marjorie sinks into a mire of existential gloom.

Salvation is provided in the form of a childhood friend (the plastic Michelle Lee adroitly cast as a plastic character) who turns up at her door with tales of glamorous adventures. But this coifed and charming character insinuates herself into Marjorie's life in most unexpected ways. The structure is undeniably sitcom, but the laughs are genuine, and Lavin's performance is an amazing creation.

The quirky charms of Mary-Louise Parker may be the best reason to see *Proof*, a modest but promising first play by David Auburn. Parker plays the emotionally fragile daughter of a celebrated mathematician who lost his mind before dying just before the play begins. Catherine is also a math prodigy, and she frets that her father's fate may await her.

Catherine's unimaginative sister is also worried, even as she sells the family house out from under her distraught sibling. When one of her father's students arrives to

sort through his papers, Catherine begins to emerge from her miserable shell as the chemistry heats up between them — at least until he doubts her truth about a remarkable mathematical formula she claims to have devised.

While some of my critic colleagues waxed rapturously about the play, I watched *Proof* with mild appreciation rather than deep involvement.

Deep involvement is not exactly a possibility at *The Full Monty*, the cartoon-like rendering of the sleeper British movie hit of a few years ago. This is entertainment at the *Best Little Whorehouse* level of dramaturgy — crowd-pleasing if slightly tawdry fun. David Yazbek's score, however, isn't nearly as memorable as what Carol Hall created for *Whorehouse*.

Terrence McNally crafted the script, and while he effectively delivers a large quotient of laughs, the sweetness that infused the movie is largely lost. That's certainly true in the gay awakening between two of the characters, so sweetly handled in the movie, and here turned into a turgid plea for tolerance.

But there is lots of male skin on view, some of it rather appealing. Hiding the battery packs for the cordless mikes, however, becomes a challenge in a cast frequently in bikini briefs.

The creators of *A Class Act* want us to know that the late Ed Kleban was straight. They almost apologize for the fact that the man who wrote the lyrics for *A Chorus Line* was a rampant womanizer. He was also a psychological mess, which gives this hapless musical biography what little edge it has.

It turns out that in addition to being a lyricist, Kleban was also a frustrated composer, and the musical digs into his trunk to find songs that make some comment on his life story. The show was originally seen off-Broadway and seems out of its league in a Broadway theater, especially with this surprisingly charm-free cast. I saw the show in previews, but I don't expect that any forthcoming improvements can save it.

### The music man

Jerry Herman, who wrote movingly about being an AIDS survivor in his autobiography *Showtune*, is using the same title for a musical career retrospective at the Marin Osher Jewish Community Center on March 17 and 18.

Herman will offer behind-the-scenes stories of how he came to write the scores for *Hello, Dolly!*, *Mame*, *Mack and Mabel*, *La Cage aux Folles*, and other musicals. He'll also provide the piano accompaniment for singers Paige O'Hara (the voice of Belle in the animated *Beauty and the Beast*), Karen Morrow (a belter of the old school), and Jason Graae (a cabaret singer whose debut CD features him in an eye-catching nude cover photo).

Performances are at 8 p.m. March 17 and 5 p.m. March 18. General admission is \$35, but at the Saturday performance, \$80 will get you in to meet Herman and his cast at a post-show reception. For more information, call 479-2000.



Performer Karen Finley

### Honey child

Karen Finley opens her newest show with an awkward striptease before moving into the audience for a lap-dance deconstruction. Forever to be labeled as one of the "NEA Four" who ran afoul of Jesse Helms, Finley returns to San Francisco next week with *Shut Up and Love Me* at Theatre Artaud.

Before she gained notoriety as a performance artist who sometimes smeared food on her body — and gave the social critics who never saw her work an easy

target for ridicule — Finley lived in San Francisco as she worked toward an MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute. She graduated in 1981 and began performing and exhibiting in Bay Area galleries and clubs before landing in New York.

In *Shut Up and Love Me*, which had its premiere last year, Finley sets out to subvert the idea of modern romance by portraying several characters with chaotic and malformed love lives. Food remains an important prop, with a honey-soaked Finley offering an S&M variation on *Winnie the Pooh* for the show's conclusion. Needless to say, no federal funds were used in this production.

A sticky Finley will be in residence at Theatre Artaud from March 15-24. Call 621-7797 for tickets.

### Young guns

Sondheim fans might want to check out the fresh and original staging of *Assassins* now on stage in the black-box theater at the Dean Leshner Center in Walnut Creek.

Kevin T. Morales, the 23-year-old director of the upstart Venus Rising Company, has created a novel framing device for the show that justifies a no-frills approach and yet adds resonance that more elaborate productions can miss. The youthful cast is admirable, though this musical about the men and women who have attempted to assassinate presidents of the United States remains a somewhat queasy enterprise.

For more information, call (925) 943-7469. ▼

Richard Dodds can be reached at [BARstage@aol.com](mailto:BARstage@aol.com).

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## DANCE

# Ballet beyond belief

## Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre in Berkeley

by Michael Wade Simpson

Anyone looking for a great group costume idea for next Halloween should make a beeline to Zellerbach Hall at UC Berkeley, where Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre is performing through March 11. The sight of nine women in Ailey's signature piece, "Revelations," all decked out in hats, fans, and long, flouncy dresses was a drag inspiration. The dancers worked those outfits, they worked that piece, as they worked every inch of every high kick and backfall all night long.

Ailey died of AIDS in 1989, but the company continues, under the directorship of Judith Jamison, as an American institution. An evening of Ailey dancing is a homecoming for audience members, many of whom began attending concerts as children. It is the kind of entertainment you can take your mother to, or a niece or first date. There is a lot of high-throttle dancing, pretty costumes, nice musculature on display, and a complete absence of irony. It's refreshing to be seduced by sweetness and sweat.

The program on Friday, March 2 featured two Ailey chestnuts, "Revelations," choreographed in 1960, and "Night Creature" from 1974, sandwiching two pieces from 2000, "Chocolate Sessions" by Dwight Rhoden, and "Following the Subtle Current Upstream" by San Francisco choreographer Alonzo King.

The differences between the up-to-the-minute stylings of Rhoden and King go beyond costuming and music choice, although those clearly help set a modern tone. Since Ailey's day, the straightforward has become twisted, emotion repressed, the technique much more complex, and the world, apparently, bleak. What impressed in the debuts was pure dancing, while what worked in the older pieces was theatricality and emotion. It was nice to have a program that offered both.

"Chocolate Sessions," Rhoden's work, was movie-modern from the first image: smoky stage, electronic music, midriff-baring costumes, and long, bare legs all over the place. All was business, all was dark, everything was lightning-fast. The phrasing had a jump-cut quality to it, like ballet with ADD. Many of Ailey's moves were incor-



From Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre's *Chocolate Sessions*

porated: beyond-belief extensions, split arabesques and off-center leaps; but faster, sharper and thrown into the mix as surprises. The three couples had some incredible, trick-laden partnering, but generally it was the women, beautiful with meat on them, actual breasts and thighs and muscles in their bodybuilder outfits, who seemed to slice themselves through space like some sexual attack. Somehow the men seemed secondary. It was something about muscles and ground vs. bone and air. The women were creatures in a hyper-speed mating dance; the men, too turned on to be able to keep up.

### Smoke rings

King's piece, another pure-dance exercise, also had the smoke machine going and the lights making moody shafts and side beams. Obviously, there is nothing sunny and bright about the new millennium. There was almost an element of competition to the dancing: phrases started and stopped, dancers walked on, did their bits in a contained space, and ran off. The sound score was a blended instrumental atmosphere without rhythm. The piece was an exercise in amazing virtuosity that didn't add up to any feeling.

In contrast, the older pieces were all heart and glitz and hokum. "Revelations" had the audience jumping into a standing O,

while the opener, "Night Creature," created a certain longing for the golden days of TV variety shows, where dancers used to make regular livings parading around doing bumps and grinds, and flashing dazzling smiles in their skin-tight costumes. The Duke Ellington piece, also called "Night Creature," was more big-band Vegas than jazz. But you don't get 15 dancers like this in Sin City. Only Ailey dancers know

how to flit from jazz to ballet to writhing Martha Graham-style contractions without batting a false eyelash. And the piece was that kind of mess.

"Revelations," however, was like coming home. One of the lasting images of 20th-century dance is the gull-shaped carved arms of the huddle of dancers in the opening number. As timeless as the score of spirituals, this piece still entertains, moves and thrills, 41 years after its conception. The key to the piece and to the whole Ailey experience is that the dancers change, but the spirit stays the same. They are still producing great African-American performers, still starting from scratch, in most cases, sending them through the ranks in their school and smaller training company, so that by the time they get to the stage they have amazing technique and the ability to pour their guts out through movement.

Ailey's company gets sent out by the State Department representing the US throughout the world, and it's a good thing. What they do may not be cutting edge, but it's impossible not to like. We are the villain America, but we smile, and we dance. ▼

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre continues through March 11 at Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley. Tickets: (510) 642-9988.

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## Martin Yesterday

◀ page 31

om gay culture. And in one of the play's odd little plot notes, we find that Matt is cum-compromised because he is taking Prozac.

### Passion flowers

Director Christopher Jenkins has fluidly staged the episodic play, which, other than several static sitting-at-a-table scenes, sustains an energy despite the piece's talky disposition. While the cast is not exactly unified in terms of talent and style, there is passion and commitment in the work.

Lee Corbett brings a breathy, Vincent Price-ominousness to his delivery as the gay politician. While one suspects it's supposed to be seductive, it would send off alarms in any right-thinking person. That makes young Matt's en-

thusiastic attraction to Martin hard to swallow. Nor does it help that the imposing Corbett looks older than Martin's stated age, while the diminutive Scott Cox looks younger than Matt's supposed age.

Cox, though, is appealing as Matt, and Jennifer Reynolds delivers a snappy sidekick performance as his comic-book colleague. Jeffrey White and Derek Cowan play the strange men lingering in Martin's life.

There are both entertainment and intriguing messages to be gleaned from *Martin Yesterday*, though the former is sporadic and the latter must be dug for. This is a play with a hidden heart. ▼

*Martin Yesterday* will run at the New Conservatory Theatre Center through April 7. Tickets are \$15-\$25. Call 861-8972.

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## Asian Am. Fest

◀ Arts cover

musical. This well-acted but rather shaky melodrama frequently (and wisely) backgrounds the narrative to scenes of traditional Filipino entertainment, with a dynamic "bamboo dance" being especially entrancing. As in *The Flip Side*, the film locates the hopes for a dislocated culture in a vital but headstrong young man, here Dante Basco as Ben Mercado, whose decision to forsake a medical career for cartooning almost destroys his family. Cajayon milks the melodrama in gangbanging scenes, but redeems the film in sudden encounters that spring to life, particularly those between Ben and his oppressive father, played by 1970s Filipino heart-throb Tirso Cruz III. *The Debut* is most delightful in the stunning dance sequences, performed by two noted Filipino-American dance troupes.

### Sex robots

Even more colorful but ultimately less satisfying is Shu Lea Cheang's *I.K.U.*, from Japan. This is typical of Cheang's work, a vertiginous multimedia attack on the senses that leaves viewers alternately enthralled and gasping for air. A millennial "head movie," this digital video production posits a dystopia in which the "Genom Corporation" advances the sexual revolution by creating "Gen-XXX I.K.U." automations. These insatiable sex robots cavort through a vivid nightmare of tech-noir, engaging in all manner of explicit encounters from cocksucking to clit-gnawing to fucking in a car. As welcome as all this hardcore sex is, the film has the polish of an ultra-slick ad campaign, which finally makes all the high-jinks exhausting. Go see it anyway for its state-of-the-art digital effects and loads of nudity, including hard-ons.

Closer to home is John Lee's *The Cut Runs Deep*, a gritty neo-noir shot in New York and taking full advantage, even when the plot begins to pale, of the location. Korean-American Lee exploits themes of biracialism and cultural identity in the story of 16-year-

old pizza boy Ben's ascension into the ranks of a highly dysfunctional Korean Mafia group. There's a heavy homo subtext here, with androgynous leader "J.D." mooning over young Ben (Alex Manning). A successful early air of mystery eventually devolves into gangsta clichés, but the film remains intriguing to the (bitter) end. Director Lee might have thought twice, though, before casting Manning; he has to be the oldest-looking 16-year-old on the planet.

*Maryam* is another New York-based (well, mostly suburban New Jersey) story, this one about an Iranian-American family's grim experiences during the Iran hostage crisis, when Middle Easterners were all painted with the same broad brush of "terrorist." Mariam Parris is fine as the conflicted cousin of Ali Armin (David Ackert), who gives a strong but somewhat hysterical performance as a revolutionary who comes to America to assassinate the Shah of Iran.

Among the fest's oddities is South Korea's *Happy Funeral Director*, by Moon-Il Chang. The director describes the subject of the film as "laughter and tears," but that hardly captures what goes on here. The story concerns four people: an aging patriarch (Oh Hyun-Kyung) who wants his grandson



Lim Chang-Jung in *Happy Funeral Director*

Jae-Hyun (Lim Chang-Jung) to take over his funeral business; and two strange young men, Chul-gu (Kim Chang-Wan) and Dae-shik (Chung Eun-Pyo), who are ready to join the business. Unfortunately, nobody in the village dies, which leaves much time for the four to philosophize, fend off the sometimes obnoxious locals ("You just want to see my naked body after I die, right?" taunts an old lady), and play, as they cavort in the baths, wrestle, and generally fool around. The director says he did not instruct his actors on how to act, which may account for the engagingly ragged feel of the film.



Kim-Chi Tyler searches for her mother in her film *Chac*

### Personal exposure

There are plenty of solid documentaries this go-round, but one of the best is Kim-Chi Tyler's *Chac*. The director, who works at CNN, was determined to discover what happened between her Vietnamese parents that caused her mother to escape with her children to America with an American man. The journey takes her to Vietnam, where she confronts — sometimes cruelly — her Vietnamese family. The film has the heft of a psychodrama as Tyler bitterly probes her relatives — particularly her real father, whose anguish is painful to watch — to find a "truth" that's elusive at best. What begins as an unretrievable



Ayumu Tokihho as Reiko #1 in *I.K.U.*

past and an unbridgeable gulf between cultures becomes a study in personal exposure and, perhaps, healing of both Tyler and her two families. This is a must-see film.

Another festival standout, and a queer one at that, is Kaze Shindo's *Love/Juice* from Japan. Shindo's name will be familiar to cinephiles; she's the granddaughter of the great Kaneto Shindo (director of *Onibaba*, among others). Maybe it's in the blood, because this is an amazingly mature work for a 24-year-old. Kyoko, straight, and Chinatsu, dyke, are roommates and best friends. Kyoko is a free spirit, doing whatever — and whomever — she pleases, while Chinatsu is a quiet artist who records her own life and the events around her in photographs. Chinatsu inevitably falls for Kyoko, who accommodates her or not as whim dictates. The relationship becomes increasingly problematic as Chinatsu's love grows while Kyoko is luring them off to be "bunnies" at a nightclub or trying to fuck the local pet-store boy. Director Shindo uses a lyrical tone throughout, even when the girls are getting down ("If you love me, I'll let you eat me," Kyoko says), and the film is shot in shimmering pastels that provide an unnervingly polished surface for all kinds of cruelties that simmer below. The casualness of the sexuality (Kyoko: "I want to see you come!" Chinatsu: "I only finger my teats and box!") recalls that other recent baby-dyke classic *Show Me Love*, but this one has such formal beauty and powerful suppressed emotions that it eclipses its predecessor. *Love/Juice* shows that Shindo is a talent to be watched.

Unscreened but undoubtedly

of interest is Yongyooth Thongkonhuth's *The Iron Ladies*, a Thai comedy described as "the inexorable march of a volleyball team composed mostly of transsexuals, transvestites, and some rather effeminate gay guys to the Thai male national championships in 1996." Sounds pretty inexorable all right. (If further entertainment is needed, there's always "April, May, and June, Jun's transvestite triplet friends!")

More homo fun can be found in the *Homo Knock Knock* program, devoted to the boys (a corresponding program, *Grrrls, Interrupted*, was not screened). These mini-movies are irresistible, and satisfying in a way that features can't be — if you don't like the one you're watching, a new one will shortly take its place. Not that they're all great, or even good. Greg Pak's *Po Mo Knock Knock* is a silly postmodernist joke that even had the temerity to generate a brief documentary about itself, *Po Mo Love Doc*. Wayne Yung's *Field Guide to Western Flowers* lovingly honors boys kissing boys, with giant magnolias and other flowers superimposed over the giddy tongue-swapping. More serious and satisfying is Richard Fung's *Sea in the Blood*, a complex dual biography of the filmmaker and his treasured sister, who died of a rare blood disease. Fung conflates that disease and AIDS in visualizations of a mysteriously seductive realm of death — shots of swimmers moving slowly through a sea tinted with red. These images are powerful poetry indeed, and typical of the provocative pleasures of this fest. ▼

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# Going for the comic jugular

## Screwball 'When Brendan Met Trudy'

by David Lamble

A 28-year-old bachelor sees a cavalcade of calamity on TV — mad cows, men in orange jumpsuits demonstrating for gay rights, a serial rapist assaulting young men and cutting their balls off! The picture of the suspect looks mighty familiar — could it be his new girlfriend? Relax, Pilgrim, it's not what you're thinking. *When Brendan Met Trudy*, opening Friday at the Lumiere, is not that kind of movie. Instead, it's that rarest of films, an actual comedy where all the characters act and talk funny for the entire length of the film. Even the credits are funny!

Coming from the fertile mind of Roddy Doyle (*The Commitments*, *The Snapper* and *The Van*), *When Brendan Met Trudy* is an Irish throwback to the screwball era of American comedy, when Preston Sturges and Billy Wilder shook the rafters on the backlot of Paramount. Doyle's hero is a terminally shy Dublin schoolteacher who, 30 years ago, would have either been living with his mother or joining the priesthood. Brendan's mother gives him a Tamagotchi for Christmas. "It'll be company for you." Brendan gives Mom the life of Jean-Luc Godard. "Of course, it's not definitive, he's not dead yet." A terminal film buff, Brendan lives large vicariously, through the exploits of Bel-

mondo, Fonda, Holden and Wayne. "Relax, Pilgrim."

One night after choir practice (Brendan does a mean solo of Cesar Franck's *Panis Angelicus*), Brendan is ambushed at the local pub by a brash young woman with an original pickup line. "Where's the party?" Trudy takes Brendan to a boho party, where she embarrasses the shit out of him by insisting that he "sing us your penis song." Humiliation is quickly followed by great sex. Brendan and Trudy fight and fuck a lot. Brendan discovers the joys of shopping for two. "I'll buy you Tampex." The couple wave at Trudy's sister in Tokyo via an Internet camera at the post office. Otherwise, Trudy doesn't seem to have any family, any history. She also goes out mysteriously at night, dressed in black and carrying rather heavy tools. Confronted, Trudy confesses. No, she's not a Montessori teacher, but instead a house burglar. It's just another

next page ►



Flora Montgomery and Peter McDonald in *When Brendan Met Trudy*



Max Born and Fanfulla in *Fellini Satyricon*

## Satyricon

Arts cover

created a subterranean Roman universe without a conscience or a moral compass. It is an orgy of food, lust, hedonism, pansexuality and, yes, even cannibalism.

Plot? There is a slim one which follows the pretty blond hero Encolpius (Martin Potter) and his beloved boytoy Giton (the miscast, chinless Max Born) from one adventure to another. Accompanying and antagonizing them is the dark-haired rival Ascylltus (Hiram Keller, who resembles a young John Casavetes), but in one scene he also runs his fingers lovingly through Encolpius' blond locks. The homoeroticism is the least of the scandals on display here, however. Nymphomaniacs and dwarves, Minotaurs and corrupt Empresses cavort across the surrealist sets that Fellini set up at Cinecittà Studios outside Rome, and the antics are sensational, indescribable and mostly inexplicable.

### Free threesome

One tableau after another is presented for the viewer's consideration, as faces like Roman masks stare directly at the viewer while the most outrageous goings-on take place in their vicinity. After her owners commit suicide, an African slave, who appears to speak Gibberish, gives into a giggly *ménage-a-trois* with Encolpius and Ascylltus. A tale-within-a-tale shows a newly widowed Roman matron succumbing to the charms of a handsome soldier who has briefly deserted his post. An impromptu shipboard wedding is presided over by Roman matriarch Tryphaena

(the always imperial Capucine), who performs a ceremony in which her husband, dressed in a yellow chiffon bridal gown, is wed to the handsome Encolpius. A starkly white young hermaphrodite, clearly on his deathbed, is trotted out across a desert landscape and worshipped like a god.

The film is short on dialog and long on visual enticements. Fellini felt little need to explain his films to his public. ("I always direct the same film," he once said. "I cannot distinguish between them.") They just were. And love them or hate them, it is impossible to feel indifferent toward them. Self-indulgent *Fellini Satyricon* certainly is. But for anyone willing to give Fellini the benefit of the doubt for 129 minutes, the visual rewards are great. Ironically, this noisy cinematic director who thrived on creating chaos was at his best in his quiet moments. When snow falls on the deck of a Roman galley, its oars rhythmically and silently swaying in the air, or when the only soundtrack (otherwise provided by Nino Rota) is the whistling wind, the true poetry of Fellini's vision shows itself.

The Castro Theatre is projecting a newly struck 35mm Widescreen print of the 1969 release, with newly translated, "unexpurgated subtitles." The dubbing of the multinational cast remains a distraction in this, like many Italian films. But this term is a euphemism which means that all of the Italian *parolaccia*, or naughty words, will be translated literally in the English version. ▼

*Fellini Satyricon* plays the Castro March 9-15.

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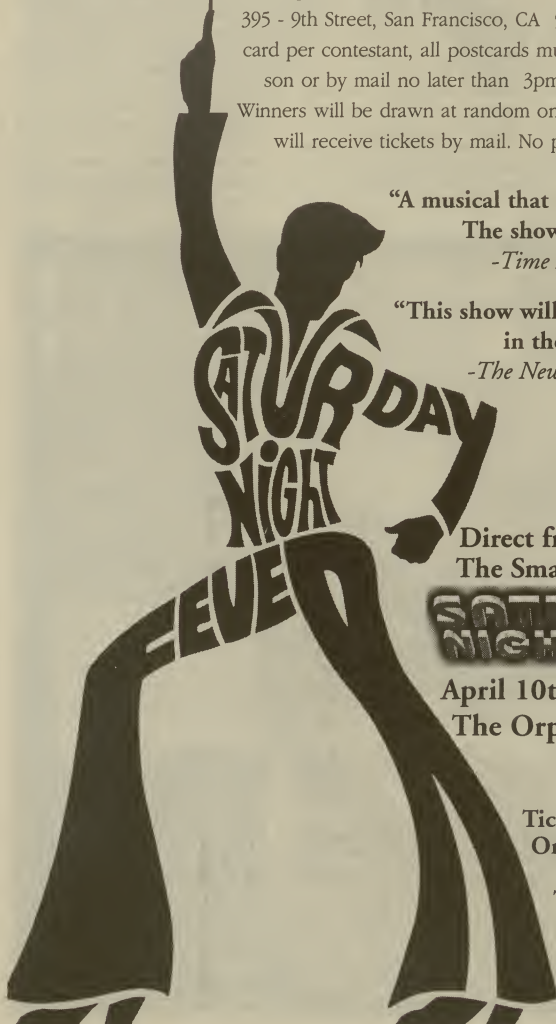
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# Visionary vocalist

## Betty Buckley to play Geary Theatre

by Richard Dodds

Calling all open-minded straight men. Betty Buckley is looking for a beau. But one who can handle a self-described "high maintenance" kind of woman.

"If any of your gay friends have straight friends," Buckley said from New York, "send them my way."

The Tony Award-winning performer arrives in San Francisco this weekend for a pair of concerts at the Geary Theatre, and as much as she enjoys her career, she knows that it's not the ideal situation for finding eligible men — especially someone who can handle a companion who frequently travels, who is committed to her career, and who very much has her own opinions.

"Guys in our society are programmed to want a certain kind of companion," Buckley said. "I met this guy about a year ago, and there was a mutual attraction between us. We were working on a project together. Rip Torn was also in our show, and he had been married to Geraldine Page, one of my favorite actresses. And this guy said, 'Can you imagine being married to Geraldine Page?' My attraction at that point went thudding into the ground."

If there isn't romance in Buckley's life at the moment, she finds it every time she opens her mouth to sing. Many of the songs in her San Francisco concerts will be drawn from her recent *Heart to Heart* CD, and there will be some old favorites as well. Maybe "Memory" from *Cats*, and definitely something from *Sunset Boulevard* — her two highest-profile Broadway shows.

But don't expect to hear "Meadowlark," the soaring ballad that has long been one of her signature songs.

"I've outgrown it," Buckley

said. "It's a young woman's song. It's a song about a younger woman's longing and her dilemma about relationships. And I don't feel that anymore. I just want to tell her, 'Snap out of it!'"

So what does Buckley look for in a song? "I like songs that have beautiful imagery," she said. "Songs that I've lived with for a long time have their own little movies that run before my eyes as I sing them. And I love good character songs. There is a kind of repertoire of characters that exist in my consciousness, kind of like these friends who I visit with during concerts."

Buckley, 54, calls herself a late bloomer. "I knew when I was young that my best work would be in these years and even later," she said. "I knew I was a work-in-progress, and that I had to grow as a person. I'm beginning to get there."

### Radio days

She recalled standing on her back porch in Fort Worth when she was 13, listening to a song on the radio, and suddenly seeing into the future. "I had a real clear vision of the kind of singer I would be, and it was like, wow, it's going to sound like this, and people will be affected like that. After we had recorded the *Cats* cast album and they brought my recording of 'Memory' to my dressing room and played it for me, there it was. Suddenly that 13-year-old's vision came back to me. It was so cool."

Buckley had plenty of encouragement for her aspirations back in Fort Worth, and she was a frequent performer on local stages, but that support did not extend into her own home. Her father, a fundamentalist Christian, likened show business to prostitution. He even blamed Betty Lynn for leading her youngest brother into a gay lifestyle by introducing him to show business.

"I've really had to work on letting myself have the success I've had because of the contrary programming that my father was very forceful about," she said. "To this day, it's still something I have to be very conscious of, because I have the tendency to undermine myself. The ways I undid myself when I was younger were much more obvious, and now they're very subtle."

During her Hollywood years in the late '70s, playing the stepmother on TV's *Eight Is Enough*, Buckley thought she was solving her problems with cocaine. "When I was first in Hollywood," she said, "Belushi, Dan Aykroyd, all of us who were young in that time period experienced what most children of the '60s experienced. And I went through it pretty quickly." She went cold turkey, and has remained a teetotaler ever since.

"I'm a meditator," she said. "I've been a student of meditation and Eastern philosophy for almost 30 years. And I've been an ardent student of psychology and my own self-analysis. It seems I still have some ways to go."

As for her sessions with her analyst, they now go far beyond the usual therapist-patient relationship. "I think of my analyst as a kind of life coach. I also think of her as a creative consultant. I'll take a script to her and get her psychological evaluation of the characters I play. For example, my interpretation of Norma Desmond in *Sunset Boulevard* was very much a collaboration with my analyst."

Buckley played Norma Desmond for two years, first in London and then as Glenn Close's replacement on Broadway. "It was the greatest two years of my life," she said, "mainly because it was so challenging. So many things I did before that required just a small portion of what I had to offer. *Sunset* pushed me to the max, and then I had to stretch to grow beyond that. I love stuff like that." ▼



Betty Buckley appears in concert at the Geary Theatre, March 11 and 12

Betty Buckley will appear in concert with pianist Kenny Werner at the Geary Theatre at

8 p.m. March 11-12. Tickets are \$20-\$75. For more information, call 749-2ACT.

## Brendan/Trudy

◀ previous page

job, she says. "You get long holidays. And so do we."

Brendan lies when he takes Trudy home to meet his family. "She's a Montessori teacher." "Oh, a nanny," sniffs Brendan's snotty sister Nuala. At which point, Trudy insults Nuala, and Mom goes off on a delightfully dotty riff on the word "motherfucker," giving that slutty slang the best exercise it's had since Ving Rhames took it off its leash in *Don King: Only in America*.

### Modern madcap

What Roddy Doyle pulls off in *When Brendan Met Trudy* is a madcap remake of Howard Hawks' screwball classic *Bringing Up Baby*, in which a brash, utterly unflappable and sublimely self-confident young woman convinces a young man to choose life. Flora Montgomery's Trudy, like Katharine Hepburn's madcap heiress, simply does whatever she feels like doing at any moment. Standing Brendan up for their first date to see a pretentious Polish epic, Trudy explains that she "changed her mind. But I bet you stayed for the film, didn't ya."

Montgomery goes for the comic jugular where the likes of Julia Roberts rely on potty-mouthed schtick.

Peter McDonald's Brendan has the loose-limbed assurance of a young Cary Grant. McDonald's imitation of Duke Wayne's walk in ill-fitting stolen sneakers is worth the price of admission, as is the duo's superb impersonation of Jean-Paul Belmondo and Jean Seberg's car-stealing scene from *Breathless*, complete with hilarious French subtitles.

First-time feature director Kieron J. Walsh does a fine job of integrating the film's many "homage" scenes into a seamlessly funny comic romp — especially the opening glimpse of Brendan lying face-down in a gutter, shot from the angle of the stolen shoes. The first time, this tribute to *Sunset Boulevard* establishes the film's audaciously funny aspirations. The second time, the scene opens a gap as big as the Grand Canyon between Brendan's Walter Mitty-like daydreams and Trudy's insistence on living in the moment. ▼

When *Brendan Met Trudy*, the second film in Shooting Gallery's spring series, opens at the Lumiere on Friday.



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## MUSIC

# Going back to her roots

## Indigo Girl Amy Ray takes an independent turn

by K.T. Drasky

It isn't exactly supposed to be a secret, but few outside the independent music world know that Amy Ray — one-half of the über-successful Indigo Girls — has been running her own not-for-profit record label for more than 10 years now. Daemon Records, based in Decatur, Georgia, was founded by Ray shortly after she and IG partner Emily Saliers made it to the majors with Epic and a couple of Grammy nods. Since 1990, Daemon has been Ray's way of keeping in touch with her down-home, Southern punk roots, by signing bands like the Rock\*A\*Teens and Three Finger Cowboy while continuing to craft the highly polished neo-folk sound that has become the veritable Indigo Girl trademark.

*Stag* marks Ray's first solo effort, and her first turn at putting out her own record on her own label. Going for an outside-the-big studio, back-to-the-basement flavor, Ray recruited some of her favorite indie artists from Daemon (why not?), as well as the dyke punk trio The Butchies, a couple of A-list independent-minded rockers, and one former runaway-turned-Broadway star, to back her on various *Stag* tracks. In fact, there's only one song on the entire CD, the rockabilly opening tune, "Johnny Rottentail," in which Ray actually goes it alone, pummeling her mandolin and singing with more yee-ha! than most of Nashville. And she's just warming up.

Ray's fans know of her inclination to go electric (consider "Go" from the last Indigo Girls album, *Come On Now Social*, to be a warm-up act for *Stag*). Ray plugs in on *Stag* for the remaining nine tracks, and what you'll hear is a rockin' and sometimes edgy Ray who spent a year dropping in on some of her favorite musicians, often laying down tracks in home studios, where a regular part of the dilemma was figuring out what bathroom to put the amps in and trying not to trip over the space heaters. The songs are hardly typical Indigo Girl fare — gone not only are the melodious harmonies and acoustic guitars, but also the

lyrics that like to tug at the old heart-strings. In their place, Ray swoops down on one of her pet preys, the old-boy network that controls the mainstream music industry, and that turns its back on women artists and all girls not currently named Britney or Christina.

### Heads roll

First head on the chopping block: Jann Wenner, *Rolling Stone's* notoriously sexist (and queer) publisher, who gets his own chorus on a gem called "Lucystoners." Ray juxtaposes Wenner against the early 20th-century feminist Lucy

Melissa York, along with bass player Alison Martlew), who back Ray on five of the tracks — and who Ray says "set the standard by which the whole record was made." Daemon artists the Rock\*A\*Teens help out on a strangely upbeat number called "Black Heart Today," and Danielle Howle's incredibly rich vocals add weight and harmony to both the dirge-like "Measure of Me" and the punk rock anthem "On Your Honor."

The album is as much a showcase for these "friends of Amy" as it is for Ray to get a chance to do the kind of music that taps into her rebellious

**'Stag' makes good on Ray's promise to 'make a punky little record' between Indigo Girls tours.**

Stone, a woman who refused to change her last name when she married, to show that when the going gets tough, girls can and will have more balls than boys.

Along those lines, the opus-like "Hey Castrator" deserves equal attention. Before you get squeamish, the song is actually one-part attack on guys like Eminem and what makes them tick, and one-part attack on Ray's own sometimes less-than-good-little Indigo Girl thoughts about others. She pleads in her tough-as-nails alto, "Take it out of me/ it makes me ill/ it makes me kill." One-time Breeder Josephine Wiggs provides the bass and keys, former Luscious Jackson drummer Kate Shellenbach drives the beat, and Joan Jett, tumbling in from an all-night *Rocky Horror Picture Show* dress rehearsal, adds her incomparable rhythm guitar and sings what Ray terms a "Broadway-ish coda" to the end of the song.

*Stag* makes good on Ray's initial promise to "make a punky little record" between Indigo Girl tours. (IG fans can breathe a hefty sigh of relief — Ray and Saliers aren't calling it quits.) It also provides a chance to get up to speed on the hot little band called The Butchies (a Durham, North Carolina-based grrrl group made up of former Team Dreschers Kaia Wilson and

streak, in an atmosphere that lends itself to the record's unlabored and spontaneous feel. For all its different participants, *Stag* delivers a remarkably cohesive sound, due, in no small part, to Ray's many years turning out nothing less with the Indigo Girls. Call it, as Ray does herself, chock-full of "Southern punk ethic-subversiveness — with a smile." And a couple a quick winks. ▼

Amy Ray and The Butchies play two shows at Slim's, April 27 & 28. Info: (415) 255-0333.



Her new album gives Amy Ray a chance to rebel.

J. Baumgartner

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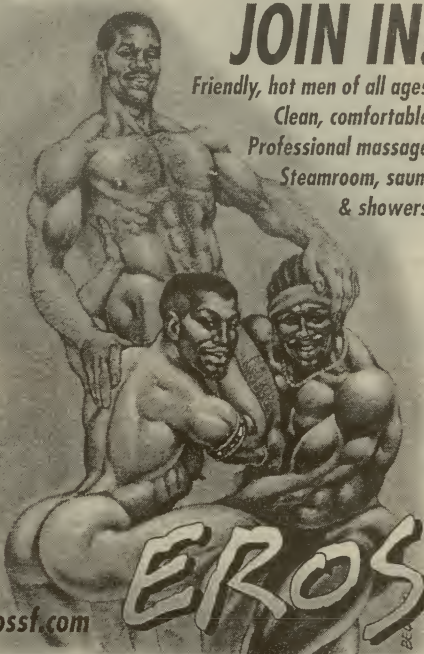
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## Marcus does Dallas

by Mister Marcus

It may have been raining off and on in Dallas all this past weekend, but the weather did not dampen the spirits of anyone who attended the first-ever Mr. and Ms. South Plains Leather weekend. Everything was kept lively by all sorts of workshops, a leather vendor fair, and the Mr. and Ms. South Plains Leather competition.

The Radisson Hotel on Mockingbird St. was the host hotel, with spacious rooms, suites and amenities for a project of this size, and there was a sizeable crowd on hand there from all over the U.S. and even a few from Canada.

The meet and greet of contestants and judges took place at the Dallas Eagle on Friday night, with three men — Duggie Decker of Houston, Scott Garrison of Dallas and Stephen Scott of Oklahoma City — vying for the male title, and two women going after the women's title — Lynette Hadlock of Bixby, Oklahoma and Jody Wierick of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Although not listed in the program, I was the head judge, and it was a learning experience to serve with Jill Carter, Lynda Blakeslee, Lady Victoria, Dean Walradt, Ann Brown, Steve Sampson and Slave Kirk. The judging interviews — another first! — were open to the public. This is a pioneering twist to competitions which I am sure will be a part of many future contests.

After a stirring national anthem by Randal Kinnear, the contest got underway exactly at 2000 for the leather image, physique and speech categories. The women were obliged to engage in a question and answer session. There was a lot of whooping and hollering throughout for favorite contestants, and the judges were hard put to make a decision.

Queen Cougar was scintillating as the mistress of ceremonies and managed to inject quite a bit of humor throughout the show.

Randal Kinnear did his job as the tally master, and by 2200, after a women's rock band kept the audience enraptured, the results were announced: Lynette Hadlock was chosen Ms. South Plains Leather 2001, and Stephen Scott was chosen Mr.

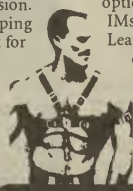


Mister Marcus

Lynette Hadlock of Bixby, Oklahoma was named Ms. South Plains Leather 2001, and Stephen Scott of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma was named Mr. South Plains Leather 2001, last Saturday night, March 3, at the Dallas Eagle in Texas.

South Plains Leather 2001.

It was a stirring moment for all concerned. Ms. Hadlock has the option of competing either at IMSL or the new Ms. World Leather title. Mr. Scott will compete at IML in Chicago in May.



Bazaar

Weather aside, it was a great weekend; everyone came away with fresh insights from the workshops, and all had a chance to see what goes on in a judging interview with contestants.

Texas hospitality was not disappointing. The host hotel was gay-friendly and helpful in all areas. The new Ms. World Leather competition will take place at this same hotel, and it certainly is

something to look forward to on Labor Day Weekend.

### The Court of Infinite Possibilities

The campaign for emperor and empress of San Francisco ended on Saturday night when Chablis and Tom Basch were elected Empress and Emperor in a landslide victory, naming their dynasty the Court of Infinite Possibilities. They say Sandy "Mama" Reinhardt and her "boys" made quite a splash when they were introduced.

### Mr. SF Leather doings

On Friday night, the five candidates for Mr. Leather of San Francisco gathered with the judges at the Powerhouse for the meet and greet party. Outgoing

next page ►

## EVENTURES IN LEATHER

### Thursday, March 8

Mr. July 2002 on the SOMA Bare Chest Calendar will be chosen tonight at 2100, and the contest returns to the Powerhouse. Greg Pennington, Mike Butler of Sacramento and the Wicked Witch of the East Vern Stewart will judge. Get involved!

### Friday, March 9

Lance Gear ends his year with the title and will sash his successor at the Mr. San Francisco Leather 2001 contest at Club Townsend. Doors open at 1900; show/contest at 2000. Don't miss this award-winning event.

### Weekend, March 9-11

In Salt Lake City, the first ever Mr. Salt Lake City Leather will be chosen on Saturday night with a weekend long series of events.

### Saturday, March 10

Cal Eagles one-day ride to the East Bay hills. Gather at 0930 at Daddy's Bar and depart at 1000. Bring \$\$ for lunch, gas and bridge tolls. If raining, postponed 'til later.

Bay Area submissives meet from 1300-1500. For invite & location, email to sfthrboy17@aol.com.

In Los Angeles, it's the meet & greet for all the Mr. Los Angeles Leather 2001 contestants and judges at the Faultline, 2200, hosted by Will Clark (it's his birthday!).

Mr. Dixie Belle Leather contest and Heart of America Leather Boy competition. If you're in the vicinity, drop in, by all means.

### Sunday, March 11

"Gag the Drag" beer/soda bust to benefit PAWS at Daddy's at 1600. Your chance to gag a smart-mouth drag queen; with magical entertainment by magician Heather Rogers.

### Wednesday, March 14

Get wet, get wild at Golden Shower Buddies party at 933 Harrison. Doors open 1900 and if you need more info, call 863-HEAD.

The Ring presents "How to Use Rods & Poles for Rigid Bondage" at their usual meeting place. For info on time, location, email to: thering@ix.netcom.com.

# Erin go braless

by Sweet Lips

St. Patrick's Day is just around the corner, and what is St. Patty's Day without a little limerick, lads and lassies?

There once was a bartender old  
Who never did what he was told.

He didn't make much in tips

But they called him Sweet Lips

And he drank more vodka than he sold!

In honor of the holiday March 17, chef Dennis ("Celts 'n' Melts") Tyler is doing a big Irish buffet at the Club Rendez-Vous and at the popular White Horse Inn in Berkeley.

Over at Kimo's, Mark Wisdom is working nights, and the handsome John David is working days—a good combination.

Little Mikey is still on the plank at Reflections, and he has really curtailed his own drinking. Speaking of teetotaling, this Monday I start my fourth month on the wagon. And they said it couldn't be done!

Don't forget the Club R-V Male Strip Night featuring the Men of Exotica, the first and third Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. There's no cover charge, but these buff boys do like to be tipped, and will show their appreciation up-close and personal. The fun and energetic host JoJo has returned from Japan and is glad to be back with the boys.

Dolly Dale has another birthday coming up on March 23, and our own Robbie aka Helen Trent celebrates another year on March 30. Watch for the big doings com-



Club Rendez-Vous' popular afternoon bartender, Rachael

ing up on April 1, a very special date. More will be revealed in my next column.

Congratulations to our new Empress and Emperor. ▼

## Cocktail Hour

## THE LAVENDER BOOKSHELF

# Prickly heat

by Jim Piechota

Quill by Neal Drinnan; St. Martin's Press, \$22.95

Prolific Australian author Neal Drinnan, who last year published some deliciously melodramatic fare with *Pussy's Bow*, once again piles on the *Queer as Folk*-like flamboyance in this sassy tale of deceit and jealous love based in his homeland.

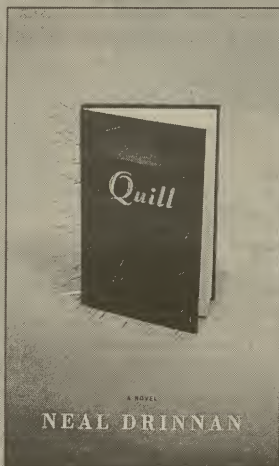
Drinnan's leading man is bestselling author Elliot Barnard, who has just published his novel *Je Louse*, which, in his ex-lover Blaise's colorful language, weighs "more than a corpse... heavier than an affair." Basically a *roman à clef* within an exposé, Elliot's book intricately and illicitly details his past relationship with Blaise, with barely any effort spent on altering the proper names of those involved (*à la* Jackie Collins).

This spicy tome, which Drinnan runs parallel to the narrative itself, shockingly reveals how Elliot and Blaise's relationship deteriorated from mistrust and several sleazy infidelities. Soon everyone close to Blaise is reading the laughable novel, and pointing accusatory fingers. Finally, a mix of curiosity and boldness forces him to covertly read it himself, much to the disapproval of his new boyfriend Woody. The hidden secrets and disloyalties now in print (along with a few hindsight surprises) infuriate Blaise, creating hostility with

Woody in the form of "huge, plate-smashing dramas." A remorseful, manipulative Elliot then suddenly returns to Australia from his hideaway on Long Island to pick up the pieces in Blaise's life. And that frothy mess comprises just the first section of the book!

"Gridiron," *Quill*'s second section, fast-forwards to the future and features Rose, Elliot's mother, now keeping a vigil by her AIDS-stricken son's bedside. Exquisitely somber, this portion of *Quill* is quite a shocking contrast in tone and texture to all of the bubbly hyperbole and fierce backbiting that came before it. At times, it reads as if Drinnan is owning up to some sort of cultural onus. This emotional downshifting may be too sudden and dispiriting (and all-too-familiar) for some, but the emotional pull of Elliot's health crisis, paired with the love and attention of friends flocking around him, gives new life to a once-hardened character. The capacity for literary heart and soul has never been on Drinnan's most-wanted list; however, these poignant scenes remain convincing, and the segment's finale is both revelatory and apposite.

For those scouring queer bookshelves for an original fictional foray: alas, no new ground is broken here. Despite this, Drinnan's status as an exuberant, campy author shouldn't suffer. Though this might not be his best effort, hard-core fans and those with a penchant for punchy Australian lingo will find all the predictable commotion amusing. ▼



## Mister Marcus

◀ previous page

Mr. SF Leather Lance Gear made it short and sweet, and various supporters of the candidates were there to cheer them on.

On Sunday afternoon, the judges gathered in the meeting room upstairs at the Lone Star Saloon for their interviews. It was a spirited session, and local as well as out-of-town judges were impressed with our five hopefuls. This week, the contestants will undergo intensive studying and rehearsals for the big night.

Ticket sales are beyond last year

at this point, with a lot of out-of-towners due to arrive for the contest. Bob Brunson and Glennon Sutter and their dedicated cadre of volunteers are all set to put on a show that will definitely knock your socks off. The doors open at 1900 at Club Townsend on Friday, March 9, and the show begins promptly at 2000. Tickets for tables may not be available at this late date, but there are plenty of general admission tickets available.

I would like to publicly thank Lance Gear for a wonderful year with the title. He raised a lot of money and managed to gain the admiration and support of the community in all his efforts. He

did us proud at IML last year, and his agenda will continue long after he places the sash on his successor. Thanks, Lance.

## Back in Kansas

The night after our Mr. SF Leather contest, the scene shifts to Kansas City, Missouri, where the Mr. Dixie Belle Leather contest takes place. This year, they have added the Heart of America Boy competition, and the winner of that title will compete for the American Leather Boy title at American Brotherhood Weekend in Washington, D.C. at the end of April. Good luck to all in Kansas City! ▼

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**Wed., March 14th**



at Market and Dolores. Club info: 487-6410; www.sfhik-ing.com

#### Bernal Hill

"Precita Park Nature Walk," with Mark Menke, the California Native Plant Society, and the Neighborhood Parks Council. An introductory walk through a magnificent display of native grassland flora where volunteers have been doing restoration for more than a decade. Free. 9-11am. Meet at the south entrance of Bernal Hill (where the road is closed off). Registration: 621-3260.

#### Daddy's Bar

Mark Paladini Productions presents "Gag the Drag," a fundraiser featuring smart-mouth, wisecracking drag queens (your raffle tickets earn you a chance to restrain and finally gag them), and professional Bay Area magician Heather Rogers. A benefit for Pets Are Wonderful Support (PAWS), a nonprofit organization that serves the needs of low-income pet owners who are living with AIDS. No cover (\$7 beverage benefit offered at door). 4-8pm.

#### PFLAG/St. Francis Lutheran Church

Psychologist Intern Samantha Clemens, well known and respected for her work with families to organize parent support groups in Northern California, leads a discussion of the coming-out process for families. Free. 2-4pm support group; 3-4pm program. 152 Church St. (at Market). Info: 921-8850.

#### New Valencia Hall

Radical Women celebrate International Women's Day by launching the new edition of *The Radical Women Manifesto* (Red Letter Press) and honoring the struggles of rebel "grrrlz." Third Wave militants and working women of all races and ages. Featuring labor activist Nancy Reiko Kato. International buffet served at 1pm (\$7 donation); program at 2pm. 1908 Mission St. Info: 864-1278.

## Mon 12

#### HMI @ Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy

Harvey Milk Institute workshop: "The Politics of Power: City Hall and the Queer Community," with Leslie Katz, the SF Supervisor who co-authored SF's landmark Equal Benefits Ordinance. \$15. 7-9pm. 4235 19th St. (at Collingwood). Registration/info: 552-7200; www.harveymilk.org

#### Mecca Restaurant & Bar

Live classic jazz and Rhythm & Blues with Nina Causey. No cover. The venue is chic, the ambience classy, the clientele gay. Shows at 8pm & 9:30pm. 2029 Market St. Reservations: 621-7000.

## Tue 13

#### Bazaar Cafe

Garrin Benfield with Jeremy Mage performs live acoustic music guaranteed to melt queer hearts. This will be an all-request concert, with the set list determined by those who email song suggestions to garrinb@hotmail.com. Anything is fair game (covers, game show themes, your favorite childhood song). The venue is the happening down-home acoustic/folk scene in SF. Free. 7pm. 5927 California St. (btwn 21st & 22nd Ave.). Info: 831-5620.



Mirna Esther Jiménez Rosales dances with the Afro-Cuban ensemble Ban Rarra, artists in residence at ODC Theater. See Friday.

## Wed 14

#### HMI @ Eros

Harvey Milk Institute/Eros workshop: "Negative by Choice, Not by Chance: For Men," with Dr. Eliyahou Farajé and Frank Strona. Participants will discuss how they and others are playing, and how to negotiate boundaries when at play. \$20. 7-10pm. 2051 Market St. (at Dolores). Registration/info: 552-7200; www.harveymilk.org

#### HMI @ Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy

Harvey Milk Institute class begins: "Acting for Beginners" with Jessica Sage (8 Wed.; 6:30-9:15pm; \$225). 4235 19th St. (at Collingwood). Registration/info: 552-7200; www.harveymilk.org

#### Mecca Restaurant & Bar

Live neo-soul and classic jazz with Josh Jones, featuring Scheherazade. No cover. Shows at 8pm & 9:30pm. 2029 Market St. Reservations: 621-7000.

#### Sweetwater, Mill Valley

In concert: Holcombe Waller and Garrin Benfield (with band), two outstanding singer/songwriters — both gay — perform at Mill Valley's liveliest music venue. 9pm. 153 Throckmorton Ave. Mill Valley.

## Thu 15

#### Center for the History of Sexual Diversity

Opening reception: "Queer Folk Art," presented by the GLBT Historical Society and the Hormel Center of the SF Public Library, curated by Marjorie Bryer, Kate Griffen, David Hansen, Terence Kiskack, James Osborne, Marc

Sanchis, and Meredith

Woods. Featuring more than 40 archival pieces, including hand-painted panels from the Artemis Society Café, a "hook-a-rug" depicting a leather man; origami Christmas ornaments; a hand-made calendar from 1970 featuring cutouts from pornographic magazines; a banner proclaiming "Sisterhood is Powerful" from the Women's Building; and much more. The artifacts have served to express queer spirituality or sexual desire, contest political issues, dramatize aspects of queer culture, and define and build community. Free. 5:30-8:30pm. Exhibition runs to April 28. 973 Market St. (at 6th St.), suite 400. Info: 777-5455; www.glhs.org

#### Studio @ Rhino

The Cutting Ball Theater presents William Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, directed and designed by Rob Melrose, costumed by Raquel Barreto, featuring Richard Bolster, William Boynton, Elizabeth Bullard, Lasse Christiansen, Paul Gerrior, Kurt Gundersen, Genevieve Lee, William Martin, Nathan Aaron Place, Paige Rogers, Lisa Shattuck, and David Sinaiko. \$12-\$20 sliding (tonight only is a pay-what-you-can preview). 8:30pm Thu.-Sun. Thru April 1. The Studio at Theatre Rhinoceros, 2926 16th St. (btwn Mission & S. Van Ness). Tix/info: 861-5079; www.cuttingball.com

#### Theater Artaud

Performance artist Karen Finley lays the honey on thick in "Shut Up and Love Me," wherein joy, sex, and romantic illusions permeate this post-feminist woman's journey of dysfunctional companionship and psychosexual lust. \$20 & \$25. 8pm (7pm Sun.). 450 Florida St. Tix/info: 621-7797; www.theaterartaud.org

#### New Meat

**Campus Theater**  
"Stand Up With Balls," a night of comedy and naked boys hosted by Blake, featur-

ing comedians Pippi Love-stocking (the Trannyshack goddess with the droll Southern drawl and pinchable cheeks) and John Sugar, who arrived on the shores of San Francisco in 1974, where he's been doing his "Gay Type Thang" ever since ("I've had a lot of fast-food sex. But then you get to the point you've done a lot of McFuck and Mc Blowjob, and you just want to get to level two."). Show at 9pm (Regular admission applies: \$15 for an all-day pass; open 11am-midnight Sun.-Thu.; 11am-2am Fri. & Sat.; ages 18-24 get in for 1/2 price). 220 Jones (at Turk). Info: 673-3384.

#### The Lab

"Los Cybrids: La Raza Techno-Crítica," a "junta of three poly-ethnic cultural diggers of the Latino sort." — John Jota Leaña, Mónica Praba Pilar, and René García — whose series of "offline performance-logues" "challenge the extended comunidad in a radical diálogo about the social, cultural and environmental consequences of information technologies." Tonight: "The Global Warmaquina: The Internet and It's Discontents." Los Cybrids is a project of Galería de la Raza. 8pm. 2948 16th St. (at Capp). Web site: www.cybrids.com

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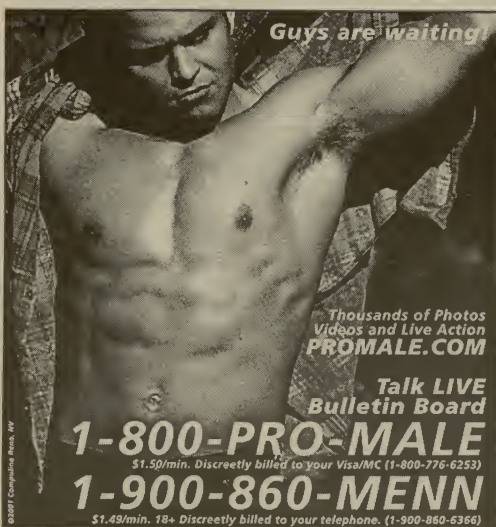
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## Be prepared — to fight injustice

'Scout's Honor' wins Freedom of  
Expression Award at Sundance Film Fest

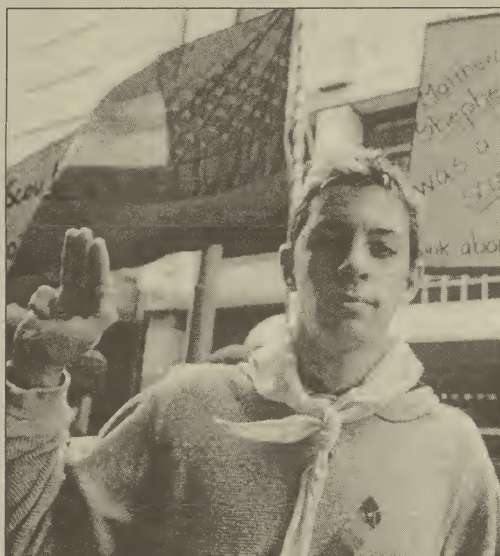
by David Batterson

**S**cout's Honor, a documentary about the conflict between the anti-gay policies of the Boy Scouts of America and the movement by many members to overturn them, has won the Playboy Foundation's Freedom of Expression Award. It was presented recently during the Sundance Film Festival's awards night program. The film also won the festival's Audience Award.

Directed and produced by Tom Shepard, *Scout's Honor* chronicles individuals who have spoken out against their expulsion from the Boy Scouts of America as a result of their sexual orientation. The film also follows the stories of a 12-year-old boy and a 70-year-old man, both heterosexual, who continually speak out against the anti-gay policies of the organization. The executive producer of *Scout's Honor* was D. Stuart Harrison.

The most prominent ex-Scout is James Dale, whose case against the Boy Scouts was heard by the US States Supreme Court. Much of the grassroots challenge has been waged from Petaluma, California. Shepard covers the stories of a 12-year-old boy (Steven Cozza) and a 70-year-old man. Both are heterosexual, and by speaking out against this discrimination, they caused the very organization they cherished to turn against them. In 1998, their struggle led to the founding of the group "Scouting for All."

Shepard was curious to find out what would motivate a young



Steven Cozza in Tom Shepard's *Scout's Honor*

Jurors for this year's Freedom of Expression Award were Randy Barbato, director of *The Eyes of Tammy Faye*, a Freedom of Expression Award nominee at last year's festival; R.J. Cutler, director and executive producer of *American High*, a 13-part series which will air this spring on PBS; Anne Makepeace, whose documentary, *Baby, It's You*, premiered in competition at the 1998 Sundance Film Festival; Merata Mita, who has been involved in film and

post-production and distribution of almost 100 documentary film and video projects, including winners of the Academy Award and the Emmy. Foundation-funded films have included: *Damned in the USA*, *Atomic Cafe*, *Jupiter's Wife*, *An American Love Story*, *The Times of Harvey Milk*, *Before Stonewall*, *Trevor and Building Bombs*.

In 1993, the Playboy Foundation established the Freedom of Expression Award at the Sundance Film Festival to honor documentary films that best educate the public on issues of social concern. The first winner was *Silverlake Life: The View from Here*, a popular video diary of two longtime gay companions from the time they discover they are HIV-positive until their deaths from AIDS. It was produced and directed by Tom Joslin and Peter Friedman.

Other gay and/or HIV-themed films have been winners as well. In 1994, the winning film *Heart of the Matter* followed one woman's struggle with HIV/AIDS. It was produced and directed by Amber Hollibaugh and Gini Reticker.

In 1996, the award went to *The Celluloid Closet*. Produced and directed by Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman, it showed how Hollywood has reflected and defined the way people think about homosexuals.

Besides its support of film, the Playboy Foundation contributes to local and national nonprofit organizations that protect personal freedom and promote social change. Since its inception in 1965, the Foundation has awarded more than \$12 million in grants, in-kind contributions and public service ads to organizations concerned with First Amendment rights, civil liberties and social justice. ▼

Film Arts Foundation presents a preview of *Scout's Honor* on Wed., March 14, 8 p.m. at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 701 Mission St. Tickets (\$7): 978-ARTS.

**Shepard covers the stories of a 12-year-old boy (Steven Cozza) and a 70-year-old man. Both are heterosexual, and by speaking out about discrimination, they caused the very organization they cherished to turn against them. They founded 'Scouting for All.'**

boy to take such a stand. He said he "began examining the moral life of a 12-year-old boy. We filmed this boy for three years, along with other individuals who have been ousted from the Boy Scouts because they are gay or because they voiced opposition to the Boy Scouts' ban on gays."

He added that "the film really looks at what happens when gay and straight people come together with a common purpose: to expunge prejudice."

### Lavender documentary

Shepard previously co-produced and edited *Camp Lavender Hill*, an award-winning PBS documentary. He also worked as an editor at National Public Radio and produced an audio documentary on the history of public radio. Shepard graduated from Stanford University, where he majored in biology and film.

video production for more than 20 years, examining the indigenous peoples of the South Pacific; and Freida Lee Mock, an Academy Award-winning director whose most recent film, *Return with Honor*, played at the 1999 Sundance Film Festival.

The Playboy Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Chicago-based Playboy Enterprises, Inc., joined with the Sundance Institute in 1993 to create the juried award, one of only nine standing awards given at the festival and the only award based solely on content. The Freedom of Expression Award honors the film that "best investigates, informs and educates the public on an issue of social concern."

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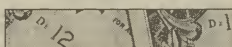
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